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CHRISTIANITY AND IMMORTALITY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

THE

DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH THEOLOGY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

(1800-1860).

8vo, 13s. net.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.,

LONDON, NEW YORK, BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS.

CHRISTIANITY AND IMMORTALITY

BY

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12942

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
FOURTH AVENUE & 30TH STREET, NEW YORK
BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS
1918

45204795

PREFACE.

THIS book has grown out of three lectures given by the author in the winter of 1916-17 in the Lady Chapel of Winchester Cathedral, under the auspices of the Diocesan Society for the Promotion of Higher Education in Religious Knowledge. The lectures were also delivered at Aldershot and Southampton. All that was said in these lectures is in substance reproduced here, but there has been much recasting and enlargement. No subject is more in men's minds at this time than that of Immortality, nor does any doctrine more require revision and reinterpretation. I had sent these pages to the printer before the appearance of the recent volume of Essays, "Immortality," edited by Canon Streeter. I am glad to find that the writers of these Essays have felt strongly the need for a restatement of our belief in a future life. The modern mind requires above all things reality in its religious beliefs. Essential

truth often fails to win its way because it is presented in forms which the advancing thought of the age has outgrown. I shall be more than satisfied if what I have written helps some to think more deeply upon a matter which so closely touches the dearest hopes and profoundest aspirations of humanity.

V. F. STORR.

BENTLEY RECTORY,
January, 1918.

SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary Considerations.

Personal Immortality, its meaning; the problem of death (pp. 1-2). Spurious forms of Immortality: (*a*) of the race, (*b*) absorption in the Infinite, (*c*) transmigration, Kharma, pre-existence and plurality of lives (pp. 3-9). Immortality involves growth; a static heaven; the growth of personality (pp. 9-11). Objections to Immortality: (*a*) man and the vastness of Nature (pp. 11-12), (*b*) heredity and personality (pp. 12-14), (*c*) mind dependent on brain; theories of connexion of physical and spiritual, Epiphenomenalism, Parallelism, Interaction; the nature of mind; failure of materialism (pp. 15-25). Nature of the evidence for Immortality (pp. 25-27). Spiritualism; the truth of its claim; temper in which to approach it; distribution of psychic powers; spiritualism and the Bible; dangers to inquirer and medium; trivial character of communications; difficulty of communicating; summary of criticism of spiritualism (pp. 27-37).

CHAPTER II.

The Moral Argument for Immortality.

The ethical value of the belief in Immortality; is the Christian hope selfish? the compensation theory and its misrepresentations (pp. 38-40). The moral argument for Immortality cumulative: (*a*) belief in judgment to come (pp. 41-42), (*b*) a hereafter demanded in order that moral victory may be complete (pp. 42-43), (*c*) conscience points to a source higher than itself; ultimate reality must include moral goodness (pp. 43-44), (*d*) the rationality of the universe; a necessary postulate, which carries with it Immortality since man here cannot fulfil his highest purposes; man's spiritual qualities not to be biologically explained (pp. 44-48). The incompleteness of human life, the value of personality, the fact of God and our fellowship with Him are sure grounds for our belief (pp. 48-50). Growth of belief in a future life among the Hebrews (pp. 50-52). Christianity confirms the moral argument (pp. 52-54).

CHAPTER III.

The Resurrection of the Body.

The resurrection of the body an essential part of the Christian doctrine of a future life (pp. 55-56). The meaning of Soul; the life-principle as an organising and body-building power; various degrees of Soul (pp. 56-58). The meaning of Spirit; not qualitatively different from Soul, but wins a distinct meaning in relation to man's origin and destiny (pp. 58-59). The Pauline tripartite psychology examined (pp. 59-63). The problem of the permanence and identity of the body; will such identity continue hereafter? (pp. 63-64). The meaning to be attached to the phrase "resurrection of the body"; whence we derive our heavenly bodies; are we making them now? Creationism and Traducianism (pp. 65-68). Christ's Resurrection; is it a pattern of our own? (pp. 68-69). The Post-Resurrection Appearances; their varying degree of materiality (pp. 69-70). How explain this? Analysis of meaning of Spirit; freedom and self-manifestation its notes (pp. 70-71). Analysis of Matter; scientific theory of matter; its plasticity (pp. 71-72). The contrast between Spirit and Matter; how far tenable? what we mean by a "thing" (pp. 72-78). The Origin of Matter. Difficulties in hypothesis of Creation. Matter not independent of God; God not First Cause, but Ground of universe; creation an eternal act, God's perpetual expression of Himself; matter the medium of His self-manifestation. The origin of Matter unknown (pp. 78-82). The Post-Resurrection Appearances examined; the inner law of them; the form taken by spiritual substance adapted to the mind to which it expresses itself. Christ's control of matter complete (pp. 83-88). The Appearances natural on the spiritual plane (p. 89). Idealism finds fewer difficulties in the story of Christ's Resurrection (pp. 90-91).

CHAPTER IV.

The Social Aspect of Immortality.

Distinction between Individuality and Personality (pp. 92-93). Personality implies fellowship; love the crown of personality; the isolated individual a fiction (pp. 93-95). Love the supreme principle of Christianity (pp. 95-97). Increased sociality an essential feature of future life; possible expansion of personality (pp. 97-98). The Divine purpose to create a Kingdom of moral personalities; fellowship the note of a Kingdom (p. 99).

CHAPTER V.

The Person of Christ and the Resurrection.

Christianity based on historical facts; the power of a fact; the fact of the Resurrection, and its effect on the early disciples (pp. 100-101). The

Resurrection vitally connected with the whole doctrine of Christ's Person (p. 101). To grasp the full meaning of Christ's Resurrection we must understand (*a*) the nature of discipleship; its essence a communicated life; (*b*) Christ's claim to be Way, Truth, Life. Life the richest term under which to express Christ's work (pp. 101-105). What the Resurrection means for us: (*a*) the individual no longer isolated or lonely (pp. 105-106); (*b*) the sense of his transiency disappears (pp. 106-107); (*c*) the worth of the individual enhanced; individuality written large on the face of Nature (pp. 107-108); (*d*) the nature of eternal life; the effect on common life of seeing it *sub specie aeternitatis* (pp. 108-111); (*e*) the power of the Resurrection for holiness and service (pp. 111-112); (*f*) a Person claims Himself to be the Resurrection and the Life; the appeal of Christ's Person; He satisfies and inspires (pp. 112-115).

CHAPTER VI.

The Traditional Elements of the Belief in a Future Life.

The silence of Christ about the Future Life deliberate (p. 116). Need for distinguishing between the essential belief and its traditional eschatological form (pp. 117-118). The New Testament, use of (*a*) Paradise (115-123), (*b*) Gehenna (pp. 123-126), (*c*) Abraham's Bosom (p. 126). The Intermediate State (*a*) in New Testament (pp. 116-129), (*b*) generally considered (pp. 129-132). The *Parousia* or Second Advent; Christ's prediction of His Return (pp. 132-133). Anticipation of the doctrine in pre-Christian literature (pp. 133-135). Summary of New Testament teaching on the *Parousia* (pp. 135-139). The problem of Christ's apocalyptic utterances; Schweitzer's theory criticised (pp. 139-145). The Johannine teaching; a spiritual interpretation given to current eschatology with deliberate purpose (pp. 145-148). No real loss to faith incurred in discarding Jewish eschatology (pp. 148-150).

CHAPTER VII.

Final Destiny.

Our final destiny decided by the choices of this life; this belief inherited from Judaism; its general acceptance since the Reformation (pp. 151-152). Abandonment of the doctrine to-day, and reasons for it (pp. 152-154). What can we substitute for it? Necessity of preserving the truths of human freedom and God's Love towards the sinner (pp. 154-155). Universalism; scanty Scriptural support for it (pp. 155-159). The meaning of *αἰώνιος* in New Testament (159-160). Time and Eternity; succession not the important element in time (pp. 160-162). Conditional Immortality; serious difficulties in the doctrine: (*a*) the punishment of the wicked (pp. 163-164), (*b*) useless lives (p. 164), (*c*) conditional

Immortality and theories of evolution (pp. 164-167). Further objections to the doctrine (*a*) contradicts the belief in the solidarity of mankind (pp. 167-168), (*b*) contradicts the Bible's view of man's constitution (p. 168), (*c*) assumes that the evil will gradually grow weaker hereafter (pp. 168-169). The New Testament teaching on Final Destiny; gravity of Christ's words; the problem of the fate of those who have never really faced the nature of Christ's claim (pp. 169-172). Can any relief be found in connexion with Christ's use of apocalyptic language? (p. 172). When is Final Destiny reached? possibilities of future growth (pp. 172-173). Examination of 1 St. Peter iii. 18-20, the preaching to the spirits in prison; was Enoch the preacher, and not Christ? (pp. 173-181). Examination of 1 St. Peter iv. 6. These passages provide no secure basis for any dogma (pp. 181-182).

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LIFE HEREAFTER.

The richness of the Christian hope of Immortality. It suggests that hereafter (*a*) our relationships with matter will be enriched (pp. 183-184), (*b*) our sociality will be increased (pp. 185-186), (*c*) our vision of truth will be clearer; the *Visio Dei* (pp. 187-189). Shall we be perfect in Heaven? the meaning of Perfection; sinlessness (pp. 189-190). How Christianity has transformed the whole thought of Immortality (pp. 190-194). The power and inspiration flowing from the hope (pp. 194-195).

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

THE only immortality which really interests us is personal immortality. It were better perhaps to speak of it as individual immortality, for personality is a term whose meaning we cannot regard as being fixed. There is growth in personality as the child develops into the man, and if growth is to be the law of our future existence there may await us an enlargement of personality, of which we can now form no adequate idea.[1] The hope which buoys us up as we think of the future life is that it will be a life far richer in significance and activity than anything which our present existence provides, and we do well to keep open before us the possibility of this expansion of personality. When we speak of a person as opposed to a thing we imply that a person has self-consciousness and is a unique centre of volitional and emotional activity. In addition, memory would seem to be essential to our conception of personality. A person must be able to recall his past experiences and claim them as belonging to himself. We demand that hereafter our individuality shall be maintained in these respects, and that we shall continue to be ourselves,

[1] I have dealt more fully with this in chapter iv.

however much the boundaries of the self may be enlarged.

The strength of this demand is best seen if we ask ourselves why the fact of death raises questionings in our minds. There is a problem connected with the death of an animal. Our curiosity is aroused. What has happened to the vanished life? What is death? What is the difference between the corpse at my foot and the dog which a few minutes ago was running at my side? But the death of a human being opens up a far more serious problem, because we apply to man a standard of value peculiar to himself. An animal, so far as we can judge of the matter, seems to have fulfilled its purpose when it has reached maturity and handed on its life to offspring, thus maintaining the existence of the species. But where man is concerned we think of his moral and spiritual worth, of his significance as a self-conscious being possessed of ideals. We resent the thought that death can put an end to a personality whose value we appraise so highly. The heart supports the reason, and rises in passionate protest against any creed which would treat man as a mere incident in a passing physical order. We cry to the God who made man,

> Thou madest man; he knows not why;
> He thinks he was not made to die.

As we shall see, the key to the whole problem of immortality lies in our consciousness of man's unique value as a moral and spiritual being. Hence, at the outset, the majority of men, who have really thought

upon the subject, will reject as inadequate certain forms of the belief in immortality which have been offered for their acceptance. What these spurious forms are we may briefly consider.

(*a*) *Corporate immortality, or the immortality of the race.*—The individual perishes, but the race, we are told, survives and improves. Such a doctrine, however, makes a person a mere means to the improvement of the race. But a person, we hold, is an end in himself, and you degrade him if you treat him as a means. Again, what is the race, what is humanity? Is there a centre of consciousness in the race? There may be. Just as our bodies are made up of myriads of individual cells, so there may be a larger unity called humanity with a life and self-consciousness of its own. But we know nothing of this, and it is difficult to imagine it. When we speak of the race we seem rather to be dealing with an abstraction. The race, at any rate, is made up of individuals, and it is individuals whom we alone know. The Positivist invites us to rejoice in the thought that, though the individual perishes, the race improves. But is there any guarantee that the race will always continue to improve? Evolution does not necessarily spell progress. If climatic conditions on the earth altered and another glacial epoch supervened, so that an ice-cap covered the whole surface of the globe, human life would become extinct. If any living organisms survived at all they would be very lowly forms, such as lichens and the like. And if humanity alone survives, what perishes is just the most valuable part of the whole process of development, namely, the

struggle, and the growth achieved through it, of the individual man. Man makes his character through work and moral effort, and character we estimate to be the most significant part of him because it represents the fruit of his striving and aspiration. Remove this, remove the personality which has grown through the striving, and you have taken away what gives the process its chief worth and meaning.[1] The doctrine of corporate immortality satisfies neither the reason nor the heart.

(*b*) *Immortality as the sense of the eternal or infinite.*—What do we mean when we speak of eternal life? In using the phrase we have to distinguish between the ideas of endlessness and quality. Eternal life connotes quality rather than a going on for ever, though, if time is a mode of our future existence, we must believe that the present possession of eternal life will guarantee its continuance hereafter. Our immediate object, however, is to consider the view which translates immortality into a present realization of the eternal. Here and now, it is said, we may have an experience of eternal life. This is true; indeed it is the basis of all our spiritual experience. We strive after Truth, Goodness, Beauty, the three supreme ideal objects of human pursuit, and unless we have some assurance that our ideals are grounded in an objective reality, unless we convince ourselves that they are realized in, and express, the very nature of God, with whom we are in living communion, our striving is meaningless. To know God, to experience God as the living Father of our spirits, is to have

[1] Cf. Mellone, *The Immortal Hope*, p. 39.

eternal life. It is a present possession. But in this experience we do not lose, but rather affirm, our individuality. The soul in knowing God is lifted out of the narrow circle of selfish interests and identifies itself with the Divine purposes. It breathes an ampler air, and enters upon a larger life, but all the while it is aware of the relationship between itself and God. It finds rather than loses itself in God, for in Him it discovers the true meaning of its existence; and having found that meaning, it craves for immortality so that the fellowship between itself and God may suffer no interruption. Some, however, would urge that the aim of religion is the suppression of personality. The finite is to feel itself one with the Infinite at each moment in such wise that the Infinite absorbs it, as the ocean absorbs the drops of rain which fall into it. Schleiermacher, for example, condemned the ordinary desire for immortality on the ground that it was selfish. Whether he himself actually believed in individual survival is uncertain. His utterances on this point are very indefinite. What he chiefly emphasized was the part played in religious experience by the feeling of dependence. This he pressed to the extent of making the goal of religious endeavour the realization by the finite soul of its oneness with the infinite whole of the universe. Cease to be yourself; become one with the totality of existence; this is immortality in its true and essential meaning. But can we regard a person as a passing moment in the life of God, or as a mere pulse-beat of the Infinite? We live and move and have our being in God, but we are not God. We are spirits, and the very meaning of

spirit is that it is "for itself". Must we not in striving to realize our oneness with the Infinite realize all the while that it is *we* who are striving? Religion involves feeling, which lies at the basis of all life, but will and reason stand above feeling as more characteristic elements of personality. It is only by suppressing will and reason that we can hope to reach the identification with the infinite whole which this theory expounds. In some rapt moment of the soul's life the mystic may temporarily lose the sense of his selfhood, but such an experience can provide no adequate satisfaction for the needs of his growing and purposeful personality. Just because he is a person he must recognize himself as other than God, even while he is most at one with Him. Realization then of our oneness with the Infinite is no adequate substitute for personal immortality. It is the craving for continuance of personal life which has to be met, and you do not meet it by insisting that it is our duty to suppress the craving.

(*c*) *Transmigration.*—The belief in transmigration is found in many parts of the world, notably in the East, and thus witnesses to the strength of the conviction that this life is not the only life. The heart of this theory is its doctrine of continual re-births. Every living creature passes from existence to existence until at last, when all desire is extinguished, and with it all activity as the fruit of desire, it reaches its goal of absorption into eternal being. Desire results in action, and so long as the soul retains any trace of desire that desire will express itself in deeds. But deeds call for requital. They are either meritorious

or the reverse, and they will receive their due recompense in a future life. The soul's future embodiment and the circumstances in which it will find itself will correspond to its choices in the previous life. Thus a bad life will result in a lower, a good in a higher, mode of existence hereafter. Closely allied with the belief in a plurality of lives is the doctrine of Karma, which teaches that there is an exact requital in a future existence for the deeds of an earlier existence. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." This law of expiation holds so long as the soul retains any desire. "Death cannot supervene so long as a remnant of deeds from previous existence is left, but whenever this is exhausted, life must go out like a lamp, when the oil has been consumed."[1] The way of release is difficult. Only when the soul arrives at universal knowledge is there an end to the unceasing progression of various lives.

The difficulties and defects of such a theory are obvious. In the first place the soul retains no memory of its earlier lives. Without memory can it be said to be the same person who survives? We cannot but ask *what* survives. Wherein lies the continuity which we demand? If you say that the soul survives as something to which the successive lives and environments may be attached, you are making the soul a bare point, or an abstraction which has really no content. If we are to speak in any intelligible sense of personal survival there must be some living continuity of experience, for which memory is required.

[1] Deussen—quoted in Hume's *An Interpretation of India's Religious History*, p. 116.

Further, the doctrine fails to meet the difficulty which evoked it. That difficulty is the fact of unmerited suffering. "Rabbi, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" The Karma-transmigration theory teaches that the evils of any one stage of existence are the just recompense for sins committed in a previous existence. But a sufferer who has no recollection of his former misdoing can hardly be satisfied with the justice of the scheme. The pessimism of the theory is another defect. Life is viewed as an evil to be escaped from. Desire must be crushed out. The progress of the soul consists in a gradual obliteration of personality. The goal of all human endeavour is to sink into the unconsciousness of Nirvana. This is the Buddhistic rendering of the doctrine. It is possible, however, to believe in pre-existence and a plurality of lives without making the extinction of personality the goal. Those who accept this belief seek to meet the difficulty about memory by arguing that, though each successive life is not aware that it has connexions with its predecessors, yet in the final stage of the process of growth the soul may recollect itself and recover memory of its previous existences. In this way the attempt is made to preserve continuity. But does such a hypothesis satisfactorily meet our demand for the continuance of personality? That can hardly be called a personal immortality which consists in a long series of detached lives, even though at the end the soul gains "clear prospect o'er its being's whole". But are the lives so entirely detached? May we not, it is urged, hold that either God, or the soul itself,

selects the new surroundings so that they harmonize with the line of the soul's past development?[1] I cannot see that this really helps us. There is still no consciously recognized continuity of experience during the successive stages of existence. And it is surely particularly difficult to believe that the soul could choose its future circumstances to match its past, and yet retain no recollection of that past.

The hypothesis of pre-existence and of a plurality of lives has proved attractive to many thinkers, partly on the ground that it is hard to form any conc ption of the origin of the self. But it is involved in serious metaphysical difficulties, and has no advantage over the simpler hypothesis that God gives each soul its being at a definite point in the story of the world. We are, however, entirely ignorant about the origin of a soul or self, and any theories upon the subject are pure speculation.

Immortality carries with it the thought of growth or development. It is a commonplace to refer to the change in our outlook which the idea of evolution has effected. Everything which has a history we now view from the standpoint of that idea. We think of the whole universe as in process of development. We judge of a thing by what it is capable of becoming. The older static view has given place to a dynamic view. Our attitude is teleological; that is, we fix our eyes on the goal or end to which the universe is moving. Now, if there is one thing more than another which is capable of growth, it is personality. The value of a human being, your child for example,

[1] This is dealt with in Ward's *The Realm of Ends*, pp. 402-5.

lies in what he may become. What interests us in the growth of a child are his possibilities. In the child are latent powers and capacities which, if proper opportunity is afforded, may ripen to results which we are quite unable to forecast. And a person, we feel, has never reached the limits of his growth. There is always more that he can achieve in the way of work and character. He never reaches his ideal, but can always go on striving after something better. We admit this readily enough in the case of our present earthly life. But there are still not a few who cling to the older static view of heaven as a place where there is no growth of personality. There the child is to remain a child saint for ever. There the good man will find himself suddenly transformed into a perfect human being. At the end of this volume I have discussed the problem of final destiny. It is enough to say here that it has become impossible for us to-day to believe that all men are to have their fates and characters irrevocably determined by their actions during a few brief years of earthly life. Such a creed not only runs counter to our sense of justice, but contradicts the principle of development, which everywhere seems to be God's law. Most men, when they die, are immature in character and powers. Their capacities are largely undeveloped, their personalities are only in the making. Are we to believe that they are never to grow any more? Christian theology, as it is popularly presented, lays stress on the immense distinction between the earthly and the heavenly life. Between the two there is "a great gulf fixed," so great indeed that critical reflection

finds it difficult to accept the doctrine. How is it possible that we can, at one stroke, as it were, be made fit for the purity and bliss of heaven?[1] Must there not be many stages of growth before the goal is reached? And can you form any conception of a human personality which is incapable of further growth? Striving after something unattained is the very law of personal life. A person is just a being who is always seeking to negate his own past and out of its experiences fashion a richer future. Stop that process of striving, and you have changed the very meaning of personality as we know it. Even for God the Perfect Personality process must have some real meaning. We cannot speak of God as growing, for He is Perfection, but the striving of the universe is not apart from Him. He enters into and shares its life. We look forward then to an immortality of growth. As we shall see later, it is just because earthly existence does not adequately satisfy the capacities for development which are in us all that we demand a future in which our powers may ripen to maturity.

Let us now consider some of the common objections to the belief in a future life which are felt to-day by those who have perhaps not thought very deeply upon this subject. There are certain difficulties which we may classify as difficulties of the imagination. These need not detain us long. They all arise from failure to apply the right standard of value. There is, for instance, the difficulty due to the discoveries of science as to the vastness of the physical

[1] Cf. Ward, *op. cit.* pp. 406-7.

universe. Can it be that man, a creature so short-lived and so insignificant, dwelling on a tiny planet which is a mere speck in an endless system of worlds, is heir to a destiny as splendid as the hope of immortality suggests? But physical immensity and moral worth have nothing in common. The hope of immortality is present because man feels himself to be a creature of high spiritual value. This value is unaffected by the physical vastness of the universe, or, if affected at all, it is in the opposite direction. It shines out with all the more lustre in contrast with the soulless movements of suns and systems of suns, to which no category of value can be applied. Man confronted with the forces of nature knows himself to be superior to them, even in the very moment when they crush and destroy his physical life. Where this difficulty is felt imagination has got the better of reason. We have allowed ourselves to fall into the error of making material magnitude our standard of judgment, forgetting that man as a spiritual being must be appraised by spiritual categories.

Similar in character, but more subtle, is the difficulty raised by the scientific study of heredity. What, after all, is a person, the student in the laboratory is tempted to ask? He begins life as a minute cell, itself the result of the union of two other cells. These cells in their turn were derived from others, and so on in a regress which goes back to the first appearance of life upon the globe. The body of the person is a meeting-point of ancestral and racial tendencies. He is what he is because the centuries have made him so. Is he in reality anything more

than a temporary focus for these great racial tendencies, a momentary expression of ancestral forces dating from a past which none can measure? Down to minutest particulars of structure and habit he is the child of the past. And though life has not yet yielded up its secret to the investigator, does not the evidence seem to indicate that a living organism is only a very complicated machine, an aggregate of molecules obeying strict physical laws? This combination of particles which we name the body has no permanent existence. The combination is always changing, and at last death shatters it altogether.[1] But what of mind or soul? Heredity answers that it too is derived from the past, and represents, in a non-material sphere, it is true, but yet a sphere which is dependent at every moment on material conditions of body, earlier impulses, and tendencies. Thus the race would seem to be everything, and the individual nothing but a channel through which the tides of heredity flow. It is as if you had a necklace whose beads were always vanishing, while new ones took their place. The string alone remains permanent. The beads are the individual members of humanity; the string represents the abiding racial forces. Here again we must not let imagination mislead us. Granting the truth of the extremely doubtful proposition that inheritance is merely a matter of physical derivation, and that spiritual influences play no part in the moulding of a personality, we must not allow ourselves to reduce personality to

[1] For a criticism of mechanical theories of life see *Mechanism, Life, and Personality*, by J. S. Haldane.

a temporary combination of particles and forces drawn from the past. Is a person a combination at all? Is that the right word to describe his unity? Self-consciousness is not a combination of anything. It is a unity unique in its nature. It stands alone, and is the peculiar mark of a person. Nor can character be called a combination in the sense that you can analyse it back into its constituent elements. Character is what I make for myself by my free action. Material is certainly supplied to the growing self in the shape of tendencies and dispositions which have come down from the past, but the resulting character is the product of my free reaction upon this material. Character expresses in a unique way my personal choices and strivings, and no two characters in the world are exactly alike. Personality, then, has to be judged by other standards than those which you apply to a study of physical inheritance. There is no physical equivalent to self-consciousness or character. Both are words which have meaning only in a spiritual sphere. Spirit is as much reality as protoplasm, but differs from it *toto cælo*, and must be described by its own appropriate categories, which are for the most part categories of value. Physical science knows nothing of worth or value, and therefore has nothing to say about a world where such values obtain. Imagination, influenced by the analytic methods of physical science, and impressed by the continuity of life, reduces man to a complex of material particles. Reason steps in to correct the mistake by pointing out that spirit moves in a non-spatial world, to which the categories of physics do not apply.

But, then, there is the close connexion between the spiritual and the physical, between soul and body. Is not the soul dependent on the body? I cannot think without a brain. Can my mental life continue when my brain perishes at death? It is probably at this point that many find the difficulties most acute, and it may be well therefore to examine the relation between the physical and the spiritual, or between mind and brain.

Let us note, however, first of all, that we are not aware of any opposition between the two series until we begin to reflect. In ordinary life we are not troubled with the problem. We know ourselves to be unities, and we treat other people with whom we associate as similar unities. At the level of our common social life no question concerning the relation of mind and brain arises, but you have simply a world of intercommunicating individuals, each of whom is aware of himself as a centre of experiences. Reflection subsequently comes in, and the unity of experience is broken up into a mental and a bodily aspect. Then develops the problem of the relation between these two aspects. As Professor Taylor puts it:—

"In actual life, before we have contaminated our direct enjoyment of it with psychological prejudices, we know nothing of the interposition of an inert 'material' organization between ourselves and the members of our social environment. The severance of the original unity of experience into a physical and a psychical aspect is entirely a product of our own abstraction-making intellect. 'Body' and 'soul' are not given actualities of experience, but artificial

mental constructions of our own derived from the actual 'facts' of life by the elaborate processes which we have just been studying." [1]

It is important to insist on this point, because the most effective criticism of the various theories propounded to explain the relation between the two series is derived from the facts of daily experience. Life in all its concrete actuality provides the surest test of the hypotheses invented to explain it.

Now there can be no question that there exists a very close connexion between brain and mind. All our thinking is accompanied and conditioned by changes in the grey matter of the brain. It is only through the body, that is, through the brain which is the central nerve-centre of the body, that we can communicate with our fellows or act upon our surroundings. An injury to the brain affects the mental life, and if the injury is sufficiently serious death supervenes. Of what nature is the connexion between the two?

There are three main theories current dealing with this problem, and we must briefly consider each.

1. There is the theory known as *Epiphenomenalism*, which maintains that all causal connexions are exclusively between brain-states. Thus a state A of the brain is followed by a state B; B is followed by C, and so forth. Throughout these sequences rigid necessity obtains. Just as a billiard ball must move

[1] *Elements of Metaphysics*, p. 314. Professor Taylor goes on to show the important consequences which follow from this dissection of experience in regard to psychological method. His remarks here appear to me to be very valuable.

at a certain pace and in a certain direction according to the impact given it by the cue, so every brain-change is accurately determined by the brain-changes which have gone before. It is the object of science to discover these causal connexions so that it may map out the orderly sequence of brain-changes, just as the astronomer seeks to determine the orderly movements of a planet. The whole problem, in a word, is one of molecular physics, the brain being treated as an aggregate of molecules. What of mind? The theory says that changes in consciousness somehow accompany the brain-changes and result from them, but there is no causal connexion between the mental changes. Thus brain-change A is accompanied by mental change 1, an idea, let us say. A causes another brain-change B which is accompanied by mental state 2. But between 1 and 2 there is no causal connexion. The changes in consciousness simply occur as helpless concomitants of the brain-changes. They are suspended, as it were, in mid-air, each being isolated from its fellows.

Let us note what this theory implies. First, it insists that mental states are always effects and never causes. That is, what we desire, think, purpose, achieves nothing, produces no result. Our actions are determined, not by our minds, but by our brains. But is there anything more absolutely certain in our experience than this, that what we believe and purpose does make all the difference to our behaviour? Conduct is unquestionably determined, at any rate in part, by consciousness. Must not a theory which so contradicts the plain facts of experience stand

condemned? If mind is thus powerless, if consciousness is simply aware of what goes on in the world, but is unable to do anything, it means that the course of events would have been the same, had there been no consciousness at all. Human beings, on this theory, are reduced to automata like Jarley's wax-works, which are wound up and set going by some external power, the only difference being that the wax-works having no minds are not aware of their movements. What is the use of mind if it is merely a passive spectator of events? It is an inexplicable excrescence on a mechanical system and nothing more. Personality is robbed of all its meaning.

Few, however, as Taylor observes, will be found to maintain such a theory in all its nakedness; it too obviously contradicts experience. Why, then, was it ever adopted? Because science wished to simplify her investigation of brain-changes. The brain is part of the material world, and is a proper subject of investigation by chemistry and physics. You simplify the problem by eliminating the action of mind and by assuming that consciousness does nothing. But the results reached by such a method are one-sided, and to offer them as the whole truth of the matter is absurd. Science is right in adopting any hypothesis it chooses in order to aid it in its inquiry, but its methods are always methods of abstraction, and can never compass the concrete fullness of life. The theory therefore was adopted in the interests of a particular method of research.

2. *Parallelism.*—A second theory regards the two series, the mental and physical, as strictly parallel.

For each brain-change there is a corresponding mental change; and, just as each brain-change is caused by its predecessor, so each mental change is caused by its mental predecessor. But there is no crossing over from the one series to the other. Brain-changes do not cause mental changes, nor mental changes brain-changes. The difference between epiphenomenalism and parallelism is clear. The former regards every mental change as an isolated happening in the mental world, without any kind of connexion with other mental changes. In the latter theory the sequences of mental changes are causally interconnected.

Now we are utterly unable to imagine what is the nature of the connexion between the two series. How does an idea arise from a brain stimulus? You hear a cry round the corner. You interpret it as a cry of distress and run to help. How has what in its physical aspect is a vibration of the air striking on the drum of your ear been converted into the idea of one in distress? No one can say. No one can tell how the physical can influence the mental or the mental the physical. The two series, which, be it again remembered, are not recognized as two in ordinary experience, seem to critical reflection to be so entirely disparate, that many thinkers have deemed it best to keep them absolutely apart by this doctrine of parallelism. This is probably the main reason why the hypothesis of parallelism has been propounded.[1] In addition the same motive operates here as in the case of the epiphenomenalist. Science

[1] Cp. Taylor, *op. cit.* pp. 322-5.

feels that it will have more chance of solving its problem if it gets rid of unknown factors. The influence of consciousness on brain is such an unknown factor, though it may be an actual fact of experience. Hence science excludes it along with the reverse influence of brain on consciousness.

The concomitance of the mental and physical seems to be an established fact. Every state of consciousness has its accompanying brain-state, and science has gone a little way, and may be expected to go further, in discovering certain definite correspondences between mental processes and processes in the brain. Localized areas of the brain are found to be closely connected with mental happenings of a special kind. But can we speak of parallelism, or does it follow that concomitance excludes interaction between the two series? Is parallelism a satisfactory term to apply? If the series are strictly parallel, then we ought to be able to find in each series the term which exactly corresponds to something in the other series. But let us consider these points. The mind is a unity. "I am I" is the formula of self-consciousness. I am a unitary being, a self who can call all my experiences my own. What is there on the physical side to correspond to this unity of self-consciousness? Not the brain, for that is a conglomerate of millions of cells. An aggregate or conglomerate provides no parallel to the unity which is there on the side of consciousness. The enclosing of the brain in a skull does not give it the unity needed to complete the parallelism. Again, I judge the world by a scale of values. The appreciations of ethics and æsthetics all

involve this standard of worth. But what on the physical side corresponds to these judgments of value? The question has really no meaning. Once more, on the physical side there is a combination in the brain centres of impressions made upon the organism, and between such combination and the synthesis of my conscious experiences there is undoubtedly a relation. But the mental synthesis is of a nature entirely different to any chemical or mechanical combination. We cannot here talk of parallelism at all, since the two processes have nothing in common.[1] It may be mentioned that supporters of parallelism usually regard the mental and physical as different aspects of one underlying reality, much as a curve may be regarded as convex or concave according to the position from which you view it. Whatever the one underlying reality is, it shows these two faces, the mental and the physical. It does not, however, follow that the two aspects are to be estimated as of the same value. One may more truly express the nature of ultimate reality than the other. A Parallelist, in a word, may lean towards materialism or idealism.

3. We fall back therefore on the simpler theory of *Interaction*, and maintain that causal interconnexions exist between the two series. Each affects the other. Dyspepsia produces depression, and conversely depression produces dyspepsia. Common sense and experience assure us that our wishes and desires do

[1] Cp. Ladd's *Outlines of Physiological Psychology*, ch. xix., where there is an excellent treatment of the problem of the connexion of body and mind.

influence our conduct. We are not mere channels through which operate forces over which we have no control, but we ourselves with conscious purpose react upon our surroundings. That we cannot explain how the one series affects the other does not alter the fact that it does so. Mind has a life and reality of its own, and so far from being entirely dependent on the brain with which it is correlated, can initiate changes in the physical series, and reacts freely in its own way to the stimuli which reach it through the body. The more we reflect upon the nature of mind the more clearly shall we realize the validity of its claim to have a life and existence of its own, and the absurdity of applying to it physical categories. It may be that we shall continue to speak of the expenditure of mental energy, but mental energy is not a form of physical energy, and we shall only involve ourselves in difficulties if we try to bring mental activity under the principle of the conservation of physical energy.

"When, then, we attempt to consider the relation of the brain and the mind without using terms of causation, we find ourselves landed in unreason through the effort to escape a fundamental law of all reason. But when we attempt to apply the physical formula (the principle of the conservation and correlation of energy) to the case of brain and mind, we find ourselves landed in absurdities of a practical as well as of a scientific sort. All the researches of physiological psychology imply that changes in the material organism and changing mental states are causally connected. All its discoveries are designed to render more precise, and to reduce to as nearly exact terms

as possible, the statements of these causal relations. On the other hand, all its discoveries emphasize the complete impossibility of considering these causal relations in terms of the conservation and correlation of physical energy?"[1]

The life of mind, then, can only be described by its appropriate categories, which are those of selfhood, interest, purpose, and the free following of ideals. None of these have any equivalents in the physical sphere. The physiological psychologist in investigating mind must remember that he is a psychologist as well as a physiologist. If he is to do justice to his subject he requires to use a double set of categories.

We have now to consider the bearing of this discussion upon the problem of survival. I have been trying to show that a study of the relation of mind and brain gives no support to materialism. Materialism affirms the supremacy of matter over mind, and asserts that matter, not spirit, is the ultimate reality. It seeks to explain the universe and all which it contains in terms of the movements of molecules. The whole is one vast machine, and everything that happens is the inevitable outcome of past conditions. Man is part of the machine, and has no freedom or initiative. He possesses consciousness, it is true, and is aware of the changes going on around him, but is powerless to modify or control them. For the materialist consciousness is a by-product of physical conditions.

Now materialism is "a creed outworn". Fifty

[1] Ladd, *op. cit.* pp. 472, 473.

years ago, when physical science was making such rapid advances, it was fashionable. To-day it has ceased to be fashionable, and is thoroughly discredited. We need not here discuss it, or show how its supporters are entangled in a maze of metaphysical difficulties and absurdities. It will be enough to ask this one question. Is there any meaning in saying that mind has come out of matter? Mind is here; it has emerged in the course of the evolution of the world. Whence came it? Can you get something out of nothing? If mind has emerged must it not have been there all the time? In other words, your starting-point is not material. And if the answer is made that mind was potentially in the original matter of the universe, let us ask what such an assertion means. No word is more capable of covering ignorance or unclear thinking than the word "potential". Mind is either mind, or it is not. Potential mind has surely no meaning. If the process of development has resulted in the presence of mind, mind must have been there at the beginning of the process: not the human mind, it is true, but the mind of God. There was a time, we believe, when no human or animal consciousness existed on this planet. Subsequently it appeared. But to admit the fact of this historical sequence is not to prove that mind was derived from matter. At whatever stage in the history of the world mind appeared reason compels us to ask how its appearance is to be accounted for. Science traces out the sequences of the historical order. Philosophy demands an explanation of the sequences. Description is not explanation. The only explanation of

human mind is the existence of an eternal mind from which it is derived.

We reach, then, the conclusion that mind is a reality, has a life of its own, controls matter, and uses it to express its own purposes. It is certainly in part dependent on brain, but cannot be reduced to an effect or product of brain. If this is so, then it does not follow that when the brain perishes at death the mind perishes also. The argument, indeed, runs in the counter direction. If mind uses body as its instrument, why should not mind survive death and use another instrument in place of the one which has perished? Death certainly means this, that the person who dies has lost his ordinary means of self-expression and communication. Our bodies are our medium of communication with our fellows. Death destroys that mode of intercourse. But the person, the self, may still be alive, only unable to prove to us who are yet in the body that he is so. To use the familiar illustration, you may be at one end of a telephone. I cut the wire and you cannot communicate with the man at the other end. But the cutting of the wire does not prove that you are not still in the telephone-box.

Another objection which is urged against the belief in immortality is that there is no evidence for the truth of the belief. But the question is, what do you mean by evidence? Evidence varies according to the nature of the subject under investigation. In the case of the physical sciences, when experiment is possible, you reach evidence which amounts to proof positive. Oxygen and hydrogen when mixed produce

water. The thing can be done before your eyes; and we are ready to believe that this will always be so, because we believe nature to be a stable system where operations are always uniform. Under like conditions like results follow. But when, as for example in the study of history, you are not dealing with facts of sense-perception or the measurable quantities of science you cannot reach proof positive. Here your conclusion is coloured by a greater or less degree of probability. No fact of past history can be strictly demonstrated. You cannot prove beyond cavil, as Whately showed, that such a person as Napoleon the Great ever existed.[1] Yet we accept the facts of past history as true on evidence which is probable; though in many cases the degree of probability is so high that it almost amounts to certainty. What should be our canons of evidence in the case of spiritual truth? Of what nature is the evidence for the existence of God and immortality? The basis of our belief here is a reasonable faith. It is faith, for we are asked to believe in something beyond the reach of sense-perception, but it is a reasonable faith. The beliefs in question can be defended by reason as harmonizing with our general view of the meaning of existence. We may call them postulates, if that word is preferred; beliefs, that is, which we feel ourselves compelled to adopt if we are to explain ourselves and the universe in which we live. We must not demand in proof of immortality evidence of a kind which it is unreasonable to expect.

The evidence in favour of human survival is cumu-

[1] *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Buonaparte.*

lative. It consists of a number of converging lines of argument which, taken in their totality, provide a satisfactory foundation for the belief. None of the arguments taken singly, nor indeed all taken together, amounts to demonstration. But they give us grounds, as I have said, for a reasonable faith of the same kind as that which supports us in our attitude towards life as a whole. Disbelief in a future life, as I shall try to show, makes human existence an insoluble riddle. Immortality follows from belief in God as a Personal Being possessed of moral attributes.

We must again remind ourselves how greatly our conviction of personal survival is strengthened by disproof of the assumptions of materialism. If we can remove the objections based on a creed which denies primacy to spirit, the road is open for the belief that the dissolution of the temporary collection of material particles which we call the body is but an incident in the life of an essentially spiritual being like man. There is a negative evidence for the future life in the overthrow of materialistic philosophy.

But is there no positive evidence of a nature which can fairly be called scientific? Is it finally true that

> We have but faith; we cannot know?

Spiritualism asserts that there is positive evidence for survival, that it has been established beyond possibility of doubt that discarnate intelligences exist and under certain conditions communicate with men on earth. It is claimed that the identity of some of these

intelligences has been satisfactorily established, and that they are proved to be the human beings who were once in the flesh. Sir Oliver Lodge, for example, in his recent book, *Raymond*, has satisfied himself and his family that he has been in communication with his son who was killed in the war. In the *Ear of Dionysius*[1] striking evidence is given which has convinced some that the late Professors Butcher and Verrall have been communicating with their friends on earth. I am not sure that some of the best recent evidence for survival is not to be found in A. J. Hill's *Psychical Investigations*, a book marked by great fairness and balance of judgment. I do not propose to discuss any of this evidence, but I should like to bring this chapter to a close by saying something about spiritualism generally.

1. The spiritualistic claim is a very old one. There were mediums in Saul's day, when the Witch of Endor professed to bring back Samuel from the dead. But the mass of men as a whole, who would surely welcome proof on a subject which so vitally touches their dearest hopes and convictions, have not been convinced of the truth of the claim. Prejudice no doubt has operated against the spiritualist, as it operated against Darwin in the minds of both theologians and men of science. New truth always finds barriers in the way of its advance. The conservatism of the human mind, the potency of customary ways of thinking, natural suspicion of knowledge which relates to a realm of existence lying beyond the familiar

[1] Cp. *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Part lxxiii., vol. xxix., March, 1917.

and ordered world of common life and established science, all help to create in relation to spiritualism a temper which moves between the two extremes of watchful criticism and violent bias. But when all allowance is made for human weakness, it is surely a striking fact that the human race as a whole has up till now given a verdict of "non proven" in the case of the spiritualist's claim. Nor can it be fairly argued in favour of spiritualism that the mass of men are not adequate judges of such difficult matters because they have not been trained in the laws of evidence. This is of course true, and it applies equally to many writers on the spiritualistic side, who display at times a credulity which is merely ludicrous. But the fact is, that only a very small minority of men trained in the investigation of evidence are satisfied of the truth of spiritualism. Men of science as a whole remain unconvinced. On the other hand, new knowledge is always coming to light, and it is our plain duty to preserve an open mind. It is probable that this century will see a big advance in our knowledge of psychic things, particularly as regards the conditions under which satisfactory experiments may be made. The study of these matters is still in its infancy. Though the subject is a very old one modern methods of investigation are new, and there is available an increasing mass of material from psychology and pathology which will all help to delimit the frontiers of a very obscure region. It is only comparatively recently that telepathy, clairvoyance, mediumship, automatic writing, cross-correspondences, and the like, are being critically investigated.

2. It is eminently unfair to group all spiritualists indiscriminately in one class. Because some mediums have been proved to be palpable frauds it does not follow that all are. An atmosphere of suspicion and prejudice has been created in the public mind by the fact that frauds have been discovered; but we must disabuse ourselves of prejudice and by patient investigation seek to disentangle the true from the false. Honest self-deception stands on a very different level from conscious deceit. There are some believers in spiritualism who are inspired, not only by a desire for truth, but by a religious motive. They work in a spirit of prayer, and believe that through spiritualism God has fresh revelation to make relating to religious truth. Whether a religious atmosphere is conducive to a temper of strict scientific inquiry may be doubted. Faith and reason do not always harmonize. The "will to believe" which characterizes faith may be a hindrance to dispassionate investigation. In connexion with these religious spiritualists an interesting problem arises. Psychic gifts seem to be as indiscriminately distributed among mankind as mathematical or musical talent. Now, assuming that God seeks to give us a further religious revelation through psychics, are we not confronted by this difficulty?

Psychic powers appear to have no connexion with moral character. A morally bad person may be a better psychic than a good one. Would God employ morally indifferent agents for the revelation of religious truth? It was not so that He worked in Israel of old. I am not anxious to press the point, but it is

worth consideration when we are confronted by the claim of the religious spiritualist.

3. Is spiritualism wrong? Do religion or morality forbid us to undertake inquiries of this kind? There are many who hold that it is wrong. They appeal to the Bible's condemnation of necromancy in support of their opinion. But, as Sir W. Barrett has pointed out, these practices were prohibited, partly because they were in vogue among Israel's heathen neighbours, but "mainly because they tended to obscure the Divine idea, to weaken the supreme faith in, and reverent worship of, the One Omnipotent Being, whom the nation was set apart to proclaim. And the reason was obvious. With no knowledge of the great world-order such as we now possess, the intellectual and moral sense of the people would only have been confounded by these psychical phenomena. Still worse, a sense of spiritual confusion would have ensued. . . . Instead of the 'arm of the Lord' beyond and above them, a motley crowd of pious, lying, vain, and jibbering spirits would have peopled the unseen; and weariness, perplexity, and, finally, despair would have enervated and destroyed the nation."[1]

Spiritualism as a branch of scientific research is one thing. Quite another thing is spiritualism as a substitute for religion. The latter we must condemn. The former we must approve, unless we are to set up barriers in front of reason and deliberately exclude certain regions from her inquiry. But is there

[1] *On the Threshold of the Unseen*, pp. 30, 31. This volume may be recommended as giving a careful and critical summary of the present position of spiritualism.

anything in God's universe which may not reverently be investigated with the high end in view of the discovery of truth? It does not, however, follow that it is wise or expedient for anyone to undertake these investigations. That dangers accompany such research is clear. It is admitted by spiritualists themselves. Men who become absorbed in these matters are in peril of losing their mental balance and their power of discriminating the true from the false. Dr. Mercier in an article in the *Hibbert Journal* for July, 1917, quotes in this connexion the opinion of Dr. G. M. Robertson, Medical Superintendent of the Royal Hospital at Morningside, Edinburgh, the chief asylum in Scotland. Dr. Robertson recognizes that spiritualism is a legitimate subject for inquiry by competent investigators, but utters this warning, that:—

"The manifestations of mediums, supposing them to be honest, are, if not morbid, yet closely related to manifestations of mental disease that have no element of the occult about them; that indulgence in practices of a spiritualistic nature is apt to awaken a dormant proclivity to hallucination in those who inherit a tendency to nervous disorders; that the belief in spiritualism merges into unmistakable delusion, so that in some cases it is impossible to say where the one ends and the other begins; that inquiries into spiritualism in some cases lead to insanity, and in other cases retard recovery from insanity, and may render permanent what might otherwise have been a temporary affection."

"All that Dr. Robertson says," adds Dr. Mercier,

"I can corroborate from my own experience, and I could add enough to justify stronger opinions, expressed in more positive terms, as to the extent of the evil."

The Christian will probably feel two things about the whole matter. He will feel that the reserve of Christ upon the subject of the future life, His refusal to satisfy curiosity, His deliberate reticence in presence of the exuberant speculations of contemporary Judaism upon the subject, are an indication that for most men such inquiries are not intended. Quite certainly he will feel that it is wrong to make spiritualism a religion, or to do anything to disturb that reasonable faith in God which is the appointed foundation for our earthly life of probation. It would be untrue to say that spiritualism is always the refuge of the spiritually bankrupt, but it is surely a fact that a large number of its adherents are persons whose religious beliefs are weak and uncertain.

If spiritualism has grave moral dangers for the inquirer, what of the medium? What is the effect upon the medium's personality of the continued attempt to make himself a channel through which other spirits may communicate? Trance mediumship involves the suppression of the ordinary waking consciousness. It may be, if the theory of the subliminal self is true, that there then emerges into activity the larger self of the medium; but how is the life of conscious personality affected by this constant suppression? Are the physical effects on the medium bad? It would seem that sometimes they are.[1] Can it be a good thing

[1] Cp. *On the Threshold of the Unseen*, pp. 259-61. "It is this weakening of self-control and personal responsibility, on the part

thus constantly to live at the subliminal level? Is not the law of our development this, that we should try to extend the area of the conscious self, to strengthen will and individuality, and to bring to bear on all that we do the full light of our conscious mind? I have heard religious spiritualists argue that self-sacrifice is the law of life, and that if a medium suffers, it is that others may benefit. Did not Christ, it is asked, die for men? But Christ's self-sacrifice involved no suppression of His personality. His was a conscious giving of Himself for men in the supreme moment of the agony in the garden and on the cross. The medium makes himself a sacrifice by suppressing self. His conscious purpose to be a medium is translated in actual fact into an unconscious process. Is not personality too sacred a thing to be thus handled?

4. *Cui bono?* is the question which many put to themselves when confronted with the results achieved by spiritualism. The supposed communications are so trivial. Very little which is of serious import has come through. Has any information about the conditions of life hereafter been given which is beyond the power of an ordinary human imagination to invent? The triviality of the communications in *Raymond* must strike any reader of the volume. It is retorted that life here is largely made up of trivialities, and that the orthodox Christian is wrong in supposing that the future existence is so entirely different from the earthly existence. If a person here can be inter-

of a medium, that constitutes, in my opinion, the chief peril of Spiritualism."

ested in small details, why cannot the same person continue to be so interested? Yet one instinctively feels that the other life, if the Christian hope is well based, must move at a higher level, and that its interests must be of a more serious kind. The mere fact of a communication from the other world, giving proof of survival, will no doubt have value for some who find themselves unable to believe in immortality on other grounds. But one cannot help asking whether such people understand the nature of religious faith. To buttress spiritual truth by seeking for evidence of a kind with that which rules in the world of sense-perception is to misconceive what spiritual truth is.[1]

In reply to the objection that the communications are so trivial, we are told that it is extraordinarily difficult for those on the other side to communicate at all. As more is understood about the conditions of such communication it is hoped that more serious contributions will be made. Allowance too must be made for the working of the medium's own mind. Much of what purports to come from beyond unquestionably comes from the unconscious self of the medium, either as influenced by the minds of those present at the sitting, or as yielding up the material stored in his subliminal being. The complicated character of the processes involved in these attempts to communicate necessitates the utmost caution in accepting results.

[1] Cp. an article in the *Hibbert Journal* for July, 1917, by the Dean of St. Paul's, "Survival and Immortality". The Dean writes: "Psychical research is trying to prove that eternal values are temporal facts, which they can never be".

All these factors have to be taken into consideration, the sitter or sitters present, the medium, the "control" acting on the medium, and the "communicator" or spirit in the other world, who uses the control as his instrument for communicating with the medium.[1] The possibilities of confusion, and of conscious or unconscious deception, are enormous.

A further objection suggests itself. It would seem on the spiritualistic theory that, not only is communication difficult, but that it is possible only for those spirits who remain in, or come back to visit, the plane which lies nearest to the life of earth. Spirits who have progressed in the other life move, we are told, farther and farther away from earth. May it not be, assuming spiritualism to be true, that by seeking to communicate with departed spirits we are hindering their progress by detaining them in the lower spheres of spirit life? On the other hand, spiritualism of the more serious kind emphasizes service as the law of heaven, and urges that departed spirits are anxious to minister to those still living on earth.

5. The conclusion of the whole matter would seem to be this. Spiritualism is a legitimate subject for reverent and scientific inquiry, but the ordinary seance too often lends itself to folly and triviality. The difficulties of the inquiry are such that only a highly trained investigator is likely to find his way through the maze. Experience has shown that the subject exercises a morbid fascination for many minds, and that there are grave dangers to health of mind

[1] The "communicator" can sometimes act directly on the medium without the interposition of a "control".

and body in spiritualistic practices. The amateur had therefore better leave them severely alone. In many cases spiritualism is the refuge of the spiritually bankrupt, but there are some whom it has helped back to faith. The belief in immortality requires for any reasonably minded person no such support as spiritualism can give, since it is based on larger and more stable foundations. There is no branch of inquiry in which self-deception and hallucination are more potent; hence there is none which requires more reverent, cautious, and unprejudiced handling if we are to arrive at the truth.

CHAPTER II.

THE MORAL ARGUMENT FOR IMMORTALITY.

It is sometimes said that belief in human immortality has no ethical value, and hinders rather than helps the cause of morality. Those who maintain this have, I think, in mind certain presentations of the doctrine of immortality which are undoubtedly open to objection. It may be well at the outset to clear away these preliminary difficulties.

First, then, it is argued that truth, beauty, goodness, the three great ideal objects of human pursuit, lose their value unless man is immortal. What is the use of striving after these things, if we are to be blotted out in a few years? Such reasoning, it is objected, detracts from the essential majesty of ideals which have a permanent value of their own, and in no wise depend for their worth upon our desire to survive death. Now we shall all agree that truth, beauty, and goodness are in their own right and nature the highest objects of pursuit, and that it is our duty to pursue them whether we are immortal or not. The man who will not admit that these ideals make a claim on our allegiance, just because they are ultimate ideals, is suffering from a moral blindness which indicates a radical perversion of his nature. If it is really meant that we are to abandon our quest after

these things unless we are sure that we are immortal, then no further argument is possible with one who holds such opinions. The light which is in him has become darkness. But surely this is not what is intended by the statement. The demand for immortality is made just because these ideals are seen to be so excellent. Man wants to pursue them further. He craves for fuller opportunity than this earthly life gives him for realizing his spiritual capacities. To blot him out of existence at death would be to make his highest purposes meaningless. The argument therefore will run as follows: "These ideals make a persistent appeal to what is noblest in me. I cannot realize them in their fullness here. I demand therefore a hereafter in which I can more fully realize them. Prove to me that I am not immortal, and you empty my loftiest aspirations of the promise which gives them their splendour. A life of high purpose will still remain such; the ideal will still exercise its compulsion over me; but I shall lose my joy in the pursuit of it. I shall be left only with a grim stoic determination to follow truth and goodness until the final eclipse overtakes me." Immortality, then, does not create the value of these ideals, but their native value carries with it the demand for immortality.

A second objection is that the future life is commonly pictured as a reward for moral striving here, or as a compensation for earthly ills and sufferings patiently borne; and it is implied that to look for a reward for virtue is really selfishness, so that the motive of Christian conduct is on analysis found to be non-moral. But what is meant by a reward? The

Mohammedan paradise of sensuous pleasure is one thing; quite another is the Christian hope of winning perfection of character. There is nothing selfish in wishing for a complete opportunity for the exercise of virtue, or for the crown of righteousness. The true Christian on earth seeks good for its own sake; he looks forward to immortality only that he may perfect his aim. And he looks for nothing for himself which others may not share. It is a "kingdom" of good which he seeks. Morality by its very meaning implies the struggle for a common good. The compensation theory of immortality is perhaps open to more objection. In popular hymns expression is given to the belief that our sufferings and trials here will be made up to us hereafter. St. Paul himself makes use of a statement which may be held to support the compensatory view, when he says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward".[1] But here, again, everything turns on the meaning we give to the phrase "made up to us". If we mean that pleasure hereafter will counterbalance pain, that is an unworthy doctrine. But if we mean that our vision of spiritual things will be all the clearer because of the purifying effects of suffering, or that our characters will be enriched through discipline and so rendered more fit for the life beyond, then there is nothing unworthy about such a creed. It represents, on the contrary, the very law of moral development and growth in Christian character.

The moral argument for immortality is many-sided

[1] Rom. viii. 18.

and cumulative. It consists of a number of converging lines of proof which, taken together form a satisfactory foundation for the belief. They do not amount to a demonstration, but they provide us, as I have already said, with a reasonable faith, a faith of the same kind as that which supports us in our attitude towards life as a whole. As we shall see later, denial of immortality is really denial of the essential rationality of the universe.

(*a*) We may begin with emphasizing the widespread belief in judgment to come. There is a persistent human conviction that moral issues are not finally determined in this life, to which expression has been given in very varying forms by many races in the past. Here the wicked often flourish and go unpunished, while virtue does not always meet with its appropriate recognition. The ethical demand for justice requires that hereafter some adjustment shall be made in this respect. This is surely a strong argument. Morality calls loudly for some future vindication of the claims of right. Nor, as is sometimes urged by those who would free ethics from its religious implications, are the requirements of the moral law in this matter of judgment and punishment satisfied in the inner court of each man's heart. We are told that his conscience passes judgment on and condemns the wrongdoer, and that nothing more is required. Doubtless conscience does so condemn, but it often happens that a man pays no heed to his conscience. Conscience then grows weaker, and the man goes on sinning. His wrongdoing increases, but the internal judgment on it diminishes in intensity. Justice is not

satisfied on these terms. The punishment, as Martineau points out, fails just when it is most required.[1] Again, the more a man progresses in morality the more conscious is he of failure. It is the saint who has the keenest sense of sin. This fact of experience contradicts the assertion that the requirements of the moral law are satisfied by the internal judgments of conscience, because the conscience of the saint, even while it condemns him, assures him that he has been honestly trying to do his best.

(*b*) The ethical demand for justice is, however, but one form of the deeper demand that morality, which here involves continual struggle, shall hereafter have opportunity for complete victory.

> Truth for truth and good for good!
> The Good, the True, the Pure, the Just.
> Take the charm "For Ever" from them,
> And they crumble into dust.[2]

Victory final and complete is impossible here, yet in our best moments we cannot rest satisfied without it. It may well be that we shall not immediately achieve it when death ushers us into the next world. The road to it may be long, there may be many stages of growth through which we shall have to pass, and moral advance may still have to be painfully won. On the other hand, the conditions of the next life may be such that progress will be more peaceful, and without the blood and tears of present striving. We do not know, nor can we picture what morality,

[1] Cp. *A Study of Religion*, vol. ii. ch. iii. § 2.
[2] Tennyson, *Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After*.

which by its very nature seems to involve struggle, will be like, when the struggle has ceased and the triumph is achieved. The essential point, however, is that we fight only that we may conquer, and for that conquest immortality is required.

(*c*) Thirdly, conscience points for its origin to a source higher than itself. It is something more than a product of social convention. The man who has sinned against conscience, when shame and remorse visit him, remains unconvinced if you tell him that he has broken only a man-made law. He cries out, "Against thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight". We may not to-day be able to accept all that Bishop Butler wrote about conscience in his famous sermons on Human Nature. His psychology in particular belongs to a mode of thinking which we have outgrown. But his central contention remains sound, that the authority and majesty of conscience cannot be explained except on the hypothesis that it emanates from God. If we view morality as law, then the moral law stands over against us invested with a dignity and grandeur which point to its having its seat in a supreme will which eternally wills the right. We must be careful, however, not to say that a thing is right because it is God's will. That suggests that, if God had willed wrong to be right, right it would become, and that moral distinctions are arbitrary. It is because a thing is right that God wills it. Right is the essential expression of His nature. Morality is part of our definition of God. We mean by God that He is the ultimate ground of right. If, on the other hand, we view morality, not as obedience to

moral law, but as the search for a supremely good end, then we can only say that moral goodness is one of those ultimate ideals beyond which we cannot go. Whatever ultimate reality is, it must include goodness. Hence we demand as the ground of the universe a Being in whom moral ideals are actualized, and in communion with whom our moral struggles shall one day find fulfilment. The immortality of man follows as a corollary from the character of God.

Let us develop this thought further, and present in somewhat different fashion the argument which we are considering.

The conviction which underlies our life both of thought and action is that the world is a rational whole, has an intelligible meaning, serves a purpose. Either the world has no meaning and serves no purpose, in which case it is an irrational chaos (and we can attach no meaning to a chaos, we cannot even think it); or it has a significance and purpose which we can, at any rate in part, discover and appreciate. Science, philosophy, and our common experience of every day all involve the postulate that the world is a rational whole, and experience increasingly vindicates our reasonable faith. We find ourselves in a world which is intelligible. The mind within us discovers a mind without us, embedded as it were in matter, and this mind we read. The more we interrogate nature the more does she respond, so that we are able progressively to understand her secrets. And in practical life we act upon the assumption that nature will not play us false. The traveller prepares for his journey in faith that the sun will rise to-morrow.

The farmer sows his seed in faith that it will ripen. The very basis of our whole life is the conviction that we are dealing with an orderly and intelligible system.

Further, this rationality of the world we cannot help interpreting in terms of end or purpose. We ourselves strive to attain ends and fulfil purposes, and we are compelled to see the same striving in nature. We meet with many difficulties when we try to formulate the argument from design in a logical manner, but the fact remains that we instinctively see purpose in nature's working, and, guided by the thought of evolution, picture the whole universe as in process of becoming, striving as a whole and in its parts to realize some end. Even the man of science, whose strict aim is to explain nature in terms of physics, where conceptions of end or purpose are ruled out, seeks to discover the uses of things, what ends they serve, what functions a structure exists to perform. If he did not ask these questions and employ the category of utility he would make little advance in his investigations. A teleological outlook therefore is natural to us. And it is natural, because we are by our very constitution purposive beings with ideals which we struggle to attain. We think, we try to understand the universe, but the more we know, the wider does the realm of truth appear. Beyond us floats the ideal of seeing all things in the light of God, and this ideal stimulates us to fresh inquiry. In the moral sphere we aim at being better than we are. There is ever present to us the contrast between the "is" and the "ought to be". We are never satisfied

with our attainment, but press forward to the goal of more perfected character.

The important question here arises which takes us into the very heart of the argument. Does our earthly life satisfy us? Can we here fulfil all our purposes or reach our ideals? Clearly we cannot. The pathos and tragedy of life consist largely in the fact that our achievement never matches our aspiration. But if death ends all, our noblest strivings become unintelligible. We are introducing an element of irrationality with the very centre of the world. The highest thing we know is personality, and that, as we have seen, is characterized by the quest for spiritual ideals. If these ideals are never anywhere to be attained, we are confronted with the problem raised by the presence of a being, whose mental constitution compels him to interpret reality in terms of purpose, but who is yet unable to find any guarantee that his own peculiar purposes, those which mark him off from the rest of creation, will be fulfilled. As Professor Royce has somewhere put it: "If death is real at all, it is real only in so far as it fulfils a purpose. But now what purpose can be fulfilled by the ending of a life that is so far unfulfilled?"[1]

It is upon these peculiar spiritual endowments of man, his moral and intellectual qualities, we must concentrate our attention. Whence came they? What purpose do they serve? Are they of use in the struggle for existence? Can they be explained biologically? It would seem that ruthless savagery and cunning, the qualities of the ape and tiger, are

[1] Quoted in Ward's *The Realm of Ends*, p. 410.

what best serve for advance in the race for life. Love, duty, self-sacrifice, the whole moral nature of man, seem to point to a different ancestry, and to demand other fields for their development. There is that in man which requires God and immortality if it is to be satisfactorily explained.

The attempt to show that morality is a product of non-moral forces and tendencies operating through a long past can satisfy only those who have failed to distinguish between a judgment of fact and a judgment of value. Grant that, as evolution tells us, there was a time when animals were upon the earth, but man was not ; grant that man then appeared, but in such a rudimentary stage of development that you could scarcely call him human. At some time in his growth he acquired a moral sense and became aware of the distinction between right and wrong. At that moment a new kind emerged in the evolutionary process, which could not be explained by anything of lower value which had preceded it. To reduce morality back to biology is to void it of its meaning. The historical fact may well be that you had first a set of non-moral conditions, and then succeeding them in time a moral being, but once the moral being is there we apply to him a judgment of value. We say that, whatever his origin may be, he has a worth now which remains, and challenges us to explain it. And we cannot explain it in terms of biology. Every new kind must be interpreted by its own appropriate categories. Water is not merely oxygen and hydrogen. It is not a mere aggregate of the atoms of those two substances, but is a true compound with laws of

behaviour and properties of its own. Origin then, as the formula runs, can never affect validity ; and the beginning in a process can never explain the end, unless you put into your beginning all that comes out of it. And then your beginning is rich with all the treasures of the end, and so needs itself to be interpreted in terms of the end. The presence of man with his spiritual nature at the conclusion of a long process of development means that the process has been all the while spiritual in quality. Man personal and moral can have come only from a source personal and moral.[1]

Our argument, then, unfolds itself as follows : (*a*) We take the incompleteness of human life here on earth as witness for its continuance hereafter. We are not illogically making a wish evidence for its own future fulfilment, because underneath the argument lies the postulate of the rationality of the world. If the world is a rational whole and has a meaning, then the impossibility of realizing our ideals here justifies us in looking for their realization hereafter. (*b*) We emphasize the value of personality. It is not to be judged by physical or biological standards alone. For it is man's spiritual endowment which is his peculiar crown. His spiritual capacities call for immortality. No talk that, though the individual perishes, the race continues will satisfy us. For what is of value is the moral achievement of the individual, what he has won

[1] In E. Caird's *The Evolution of Religion*, lecture 2, "Different Methods of Defining Religion," there is an excellent discussion of how to interpret a development.

in his spiritual wrestling with evil, what he has yet to win if further opportunity is offered. The race may have a character, that is, it may represent a summation of qualities, but it has no personal character ; and it is this latter, with all which it implies of moral effort, with all its sanctities of failure and triumph, of remorse and aspiration, which we demand shall continue. (*c*) Finally, we fall back on the fact of God. The existence of God provides the surest basis for our belief in immortality. If the rationality of the world implies that a personal mind and will is the ground of reality then human immortality follows as a natural consequence. For what we mean by God is the Being in whom our ideals are realized. He is perfect truth and perfect goodness ; that is His very essence and character. Can it be that He will allow to perish a being whose special characteristic is that he possesses a share in the Divine nature? If so, then what we believe to be God's supreme purpose, the gradual establishment of a kingdom of righteousness, must suffer defeat ; for man alone among created things on earth is capable of realizing moral ideals. Or we may put the matter thus. Man is capable of fellowship with God. That is what religion signifies. And God, as Christ has revealed Him, is a God of love. Love expresses itself in communion and fellowship. The Love of God is educating men into fellowship with itself. Are we to say that death arrests that process? Spiritual capacity develops slowly. The exploration of God, if I may so put it, requires time. But every advance in fellowship with God heightens the capacity for further fellowship. We destroy

religion at its very core if we limit this fellowship to the brief span of earthly existence.

A word may be said here in passing as to the growth among the Jews of the hope of immortality. The ordinary Hebrew belief was that there was a place of departed spirits which they called Sheol, the equivalent of the Greek Hades (mistranslated "hell" in the Creed). But Sheol was a gloomy, joyless place, an abode of dust and darkness, where men lived on as phantoms and kings kept a phantom state; a place where God was not, and life was sad and hopeless. It is amazing that the Hebrews had such a living faith in God, when the only immortality to which they could look forward was a posthumous immortality in their children. If we would know what an Old Testament death-bed was like, let us read the account of Hezekiah's sickness in Isaiah xxxviii.[1] Here and there possibly before the exile a devout believer had a glimpse of something better, but it was only a glimpse. We are apt to read too full a meaning into some of the expressions of hope in the psalms and prophets. But after the exile we find a far fuller belief in existence, and when Christ came the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was very generally accepted by the mass of the people.

What had brought about the change? To some slight extent it may have been due to contact with eastern faiths during the captivity, but we must not lay much stress upon this. The real ground for the

[1] Cp. Sir G. Adam Smith's *Isaiah*, vol. i. chap. xxv., "An Old Testament Believer's Sick-Bed; or, The Difference Christ has made".

change was a deepening spiritual experience which argued thus: "God made man for fellowship with Himself, and gave him a share in His own nature. Can it be that death will interrupt that fellowship?" In many directions the spiritual experience of the race developed. The exile and the apparent forsaking of the chosen people by God drove them to profounder reflection upon the true nature of religion, and this they discovered to lie in an increasing fellowship with God. Again, they learned, when the national life was broken up, to value the individual more highly. The worth of the individual soul was one of the chief lessons taught by Jeremiah and Ezekiel. And as they became aware of this worth, they saw how death could not really destroy the individual, who was made for a nobler destiny. Once more, the promise of return from exile led to the growth of a belief in the resurrection of dead Israelites, who ought, it was felt to share in the joys of the return. Then, after the return, when the nation was still oppressed by foreign conquerors, and there seemed to be no chance of a fulfilment of the splendid prophecies of old, which pictured Jerusalem as the metropolis of a world-kingdom and the heathen as subject peoples sharing in her triumph, men's minds turned to the thought of some sudden catastrophe, some signal supernatural act of God by which He was to vindicate His sovereignty. God, or His agent the Messiah, would suddenly intervene; the existing world-order would perish and a new order would be set up. The righteous in Israel would be rewarded, the wicked and the heathen would be punished. And in order that this judgment

might take place a resurrection of the dead was necessary.

In some such ways as this did the belief in a future life develop among the Jews. But the determining factor in it all was reflection on what man's fellowship with God really implied. The argument from purpose which we have been considering is the Jewish argument put in modern form. Man as a creature of high spiritual ideals may reasonably believe, nay, must believe, that his ideals will ultimately be realized by himself in God, in whom they are eternally realized.[1]

It remains briefly to inquire how far Christianity confirms this moral argument for immortality. In the first place, the thought of judgment to come is central in Christ's teaching. Many of the associations which have gathered round this thought belong to the traditional element in Christianity, and may require revision.[2] Our Lord's utterances about final judgment involve also the difficult problem of the significance of the apocalyptic element in His teaching. But none can deny that He plainly asserted that a judgment of some kind would take place. And this judgment was to be according to character. At times special features of moral character are singled out as provid-

[1] For the growth of the belief in immortality among the Jews see Charles's *Eschatology, Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian.* Also an admirable essay of an earlier date (1889) by Mackintosh, "The Biblical Doctrines of Judgment and Immortality" in *Essays Towards a New Theology.*

[2] Cp. chap. vi. of this volume.

ing the standard of judgment. We are to be judged according to our words,[1] or according to our charity and benevolence.[2] At other times the standard is stated to be our general attitude to Christ Himself.[3] But everywhere the judgment is pictured as ethical in character and universal in scope. It carries with it both rewards and punishments. In the second place, Christ emphasized the worth of human personality.[4] He taught that every human being is God's child and of infinite value in His eyes. He was made for fellowship with God. Prayer is his natural mode of communion with God. The service of God is his duty and privilege.

The most significant feature, however, in Christ's attitude to this problem is that He assumed man's immortality, rather than argued to prove it. Realization of God through communion with Him has immortality as its necessary implicate. Thus, when the Sadducees came with their question about the resurrection of the dead, Jesus shows them that they have failed to understand their own Scriptures. God called Himself the God of the patriarchs after they were dead. If they were dead, how could He still be their God? They were therefore alive; and they were alive because death could not permanently interrupt the fellowship with God which had been the mark of their religious experience. The Johannine teaching about eternal life as a present possession involves the same assurance of immortality. Eternal life is the life of God in the soul. It is God's gift, and he who

[1] Matt. xii. 36, 37. [2] *Ibid.* xxv. 31-46. [3] *Ibid.* x. 32, 33.
[4] *Ibid.* xvi. 26; x. 31; Luke xv. 10.

has it shares in the life of God. This gift is mediated through Christ. Christ offers Himself as a source of life for man, and union with Him must issue in immortality. For the Resurrection proclaims Christ victor over death, a victor who achieved no solitary triumph for Himself alone, but a triumph for all believers, with whom He is indissolubly united as their Life-Giver and Inspirer.[1]

[1] For a fuller treatment of the meaning of eternal life cp. chaps. v. and vii. of this volume.

CHAPTER III.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

THE Christian doctrine of the future life includes a belief in the resurrection of the body. Of the existence of disembodied spirits Christianity knows nothing. The immortality of the soul apart from the body, which we find taught by Plato, is an impossible conception for a religion, the central article of whose creed is the Incarnation. The Christian can no longer with Greek thought regard matter as evil, or the body as the soul's prison-house from which it looks forward to be set free by death ; for the coming of Christ in the flesh has given to matter a sacramental aspect and has emphasized the sacredness of all life. Man's survival of death must imply the possession of a body. It is the man who is immortal, rather than his soul.

The teaching of Christianity here falls into line with our ordinary knowledge and experience. We know nothing of soul or spirit apart from matter. We have no experience of anything which is without relations with the material world. Reflection, it is true, leads us to distinguish in ourselves two aspects which we name the spiritual and physical, or soul and body, but these are never found the one apart from the other, and it requires an effort of thought to

separate them. In our common living and social intercourse with our fellows we treat human beings as concrete unities. Whatever spirit may be, it manifests its presence through matter. Matter conditions all its activities. The most abstract thinking reposes on a brain basis. The mystic's vivid experience of God is mediated through his body. Christianity, therefore, only extends to the future existence a principle which universally holds good of our present life.[1]

No term is used in common speech with vaguer meaning than the term "soul," and this vagueness extends to current popular theology which has accepted from St. Paul a threefold division of man into body, soul, spirit, without adequate consideration of what St. Paul meant, or whether such a division can really be maintained. This tripartite psychology stands in need of reconsideration in the light of modern thought. We must ask what we mean when we use the word "soul". When we say that the soul survives death, what is it which we think of as surviving? Can we satisfactorily distinguish between soul and spirit?

We shall best approach our problem if we try to analyse what we mean by life. Life is never found except as embodied. Wherever there is life there is a material organization through which the life-principle expresses itself. This material organization we speak of as body. Our bodies are our means of communication with each other and with our physical surroundings. In addition, they separate us from

[1] Cp. Sir Oliver Lodge's *Man and the Universe*, chap. xii.

each other and so help to create in us a sense of our distinct personality. What life is no one knows, but the life-principle manifests itself as an organizing or body-building power. The living being, plant or animal or man, makes its own body. It is continually shaping for itself a material organization. It builds up into its own tissues the substances which it takes from its surroundings, and so arranges the material particles that each one passes to its right place in the total structure, one going to make bone, another to make sinew or hair or flesh. Who directs these marvellous operations? Who controls the growth of the millions of cells of which the body is composed? That is life's great unanswered secret. We are dumb in presence of it. All we can say is that life implies this creative, regulative, organizing power.

> For of the soule the bodie forme doth take,
> For soule is forme and doth the bodie make.[1]

It is plain, then, what body is. Body is the material organization, physical in substance and occupying space, through which the life-principle expresses itself. What is soul? May we not say that soul is this life-principle? Soul and life are thus synonymous terms, and they are frequently so used in the Bible.[2]

If it is objected that such usage empties soul of the more spiritual meaning with which we have been accustomed to connect it, the answer is simple. Soul, like life, exists in ascending degrees of value. The

[1] Spenser's *Hymn in Honour of Beautie*.
[2] Cp. Sir Oliver Lodge, *op. cit.* chap. viii.

soul of a shrimp is presumably less spiritual in quality than the soul of a man, inasmuch as man possesses moral reason and loftier intellectual powers. The activity of the life-principle is not an activity which is uniform in its operation. Higher and lower manifestations of life everywhere exist, and there are consequently higher and lower souls. One of our problems is to determine at what point in the scale souls emerge with a survival value which justifies us in claiming for them immortality.

What now do we mean by spirit? Can we distinguish it from soul? As regards qualitative content I do not think we can. Spirit in general usage stands for those higher qualities and attributes which are peculiarly man's endowment, but these may with equal truth be grouped under the concept of the human soul. It is, however, when we think of man's origin and destiny that the term "spirit" acquires a special meaning. Spirit points us to the truth which we believe underlies the statement of the Bible that man was made in the Divine image, and calls up the associations connected with the thought that we were intended for fellowship with God. Man shares with the animals the gift of life from God, but he possesses attributes which are peculiarly his own. The two narratives of creation in Genesis both emphasize this point.

In the one we read, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (i. 26); in the other, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (ii. 7).

It is not said that the animals were made in the Divine image, and they are nowhere described as receiving their life from the breath of God. The writers of these narratives clearly wished to indicate that man among all created beings was unique in his possession of spiritual qualities which he shared only with God.[1] The Old Testament insists throughout on the capacity of man for fellowship with God; and it was as the Jew meditated on this truth, and as his religious experience deepened, that he rose to the conviction of immortality. If man's origin was from God, his goal could only be God.

When we turn to St. Paul we find him using the word soul (*psuche*) thirteen times, and the word spirit (*pneuma*) 146 times. It is important to understand what he meant by them. In six passages soul denotes life, and has no further signification; as for example in the phrase "who for my life laid down their own necks".[2] On three occasions it is used to denote the individual. Thus, "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers".[3] On three other occasions it carries with it the meaning "desire," as when he bids the Philippians "stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the Gospel".[4] The one remaining usage of the term is in the familiar passage,

[1] Cp. Ryle's note on both passages in *Genesis*, Cambridge Bible Series.

[2] Rom. xvi. 4; cp. Phil. ii. 30; 2 Cor. i. 23; 1 Thess. ii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 45; Rom. xi. 3.

[3] Rom. xiii. 1; cp. ii. 9; 2 Cor. xii. 15.

[4] Phil. i. 27; cp. Eph. vi. 6, R.V. marg.; Col. iii. 23, R.V. marg.

"And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ".[1] The meaning here is surely plain. The apostle is not carefully describing man's psychological structure as threefold, but is expressing the hope that his converts may be preserved in the fullness of their personality. As has been pointed out, the true analogy of this passage is such an Old Testament sentence as Deuteronomy vi. 5, where a somewhat similar enumeration emphasizes the totality of the personality: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart (*leb*), and with all thy soul (*nephesh*), and with all thy might".[2] The Pauline use of soul lends no countenance to the popular belief that the soul is a detachable something located in the body, which survives when the body perishes in the grave.

St. Paul's use of spirit (*pneuma*) is more important. In the great majority of instances he implies by it some Divine or supernatural influence. For it was a cardinal principle of his theology that the Spirit of God, working through Christ, regenerated and sanctified the believer (cp. Rom. viii. 9-11). But he also uses *pneuma* of man, sometimes to indicate a natural element of his constitution, at other times to indicate those higher elements in the Christian, which are the result of the indwelling of the Divine Spirit. As examples of the former usage we may take such

[1] 1 Thess. v. 23.

[2] H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Doctrine of Man*, p. 108. I am indebted to his excellent book for help in this account of St. Paul's teaching.

passages as these: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit" (2 Cor. vii. 1); "God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son" (Rom. i. 9); "if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom. viii. 10). Here spirit seems to be used in contrast with body as meaning the higher part of us. The latter usage is illustrated by such passages as the following: "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Rom. viii. 16); "that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man" (Eph. iii. 16); or the classical passage (Rom. viii. 1-14), where life according to the Spirit is contrasted with the life of the flesh, and where it is stated that the sons of God are those who are "led by the Spirit of God". What is here emphasized is the indwelling of the human by the Divine Spirit. Christian conduct and character are the fruits of such indwelling.

In addition to *psuche* and *pneuma* St. Paul uses the corresponding adjectives, *psuchikos* and *pneumatikos*. In 1 Corinthians ii. 14, 15, we have the contrast between the two: "Now the natural (psychic) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them because they are spiritually judged. But he that is spiritual (pneumatic) judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man." Man regenerated and illuminated by Divine influences is here contrasted with man in his natural state. In 1 Corinthians xv. 44-46 a further contrast is made, of which we shall have

more to say later, the contrast between the present "psychic" body and the "pneumatic" or resurrection body. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." That the believer will receive a pneumatic body is due to the work of the Divine indwelling Spirit. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. viii. 11).

What conclusions may we draw from this brief and incomplete analysis of St. Paul's psychology? First, that with a practical aim in view he was not careful to write with scientific exactitude. He uses, for example, as we have seen, the same word *pneuma* to describe both the higher attributes of man, and the supernatural life which is the gift of God's Spirit. Secondly, his use of soul or *psuche* shows that he means by it the life-principle which animates the body. When taken in connexion with his teaching about the flesh it clearly refers in the main to the life of the body, and carries with it no implication of immortality. Thirdly, spirit in the majority of instances has a supernatural reference. St. Paul regards the higher elements of man's constitution as capable of supernatural elevation through contact with the Divine Spirit. It becomes therefore impossible in the case of the Christian life to distinguish clearly between the human and the Divine, for the Divine indwells and completely transforms the human. Human immortality is the result of this indwelling. The Spirit of Christ makes us sharers in His resurrection, and it is through the

activity of the Divine Spirit that we shall find ourselves clothed hereafter with a spiritual body.

We shall probably continue to employ the phrase "the immortality of the soul," which is consecrated by long usage in the past; but in doing so we should be careful to see that we understand what we mean.

Let us revert to our consideration of the body. We have seen that in a living organism we must distinguish between the body, or material structure, and the regulative life-principle. Now the body is in process of constant change. Its outworn particles are always being replaced by new material. After the lapse of a few years, commonly said to be seven, an entire change of material has taken place. The body has become a new body, and this in its turn will give place to another. Wherein, then, consists our identity? We speak of a river as being the same though its waters are in perpetual procession. Here we judge by the banks, by the geographical position occupied by the river-bed in relation to other stationary objects. The form of the river remains for all practical purposes the same. Is there an identity of form in the case of our bodies? If so, will that identity continue hereafter? To a considerable extent there is this identity of form, and it is this which enables us to recognize each other. The form is not indeed absolutely fixed, but once maturity has been reached the outlines of the form and its main features remain substantially the same. Any change which occurs happens so gradually as a rule that we can afford to neglect the differences. They do not make recognition impossible. But what gives this identity

to the outward form of the body? It can only be the regulative life-principle, which so arranges the materials constantly assimilated by the body that the original proportions and distributions are preserved. We cannot therefore think of body as a mere collection of particles. In each case there is a special rhythm of organization which differs for every person. Every organism has its peculiar scheme of combination of particles which makes it what it is. For each there is a law or principle of organization at work. May it not be that this principle will continue in operation hereafter, and that, whatever the resurrection body may be, it will be appropriate to our personality, and reproduce in different material sufficient of the old outline and form for recognition?[1] Our identity here is in part an identity of form, but since this depends upon the controlling activity of the life-principle it is clear that the identity of a person is something much more profound than an identity of body. Our true self lies deeper. If we analyse what we mean by personality we seem to discover the following elements, which we judge to be necessary for the existence of a person, self-consciousness, will, memory, and an emotional reaction which is unique for each. When we speak of personal immortality we imply that these elements will continue. All are essential to personality, and not least emotion, which covers the whole range of our experience and is the peculiar expression of a living self. Love is the highest of the emotions, and the life of heaven is a life of love.

"I believe in the resurrection of the body"; what

[1] Cp. Westcott's *The Gospel of the Resurrection*, pp. 143-5.

meaning can we attach to this phrase?[1] We cannot possibly mean that the body which is put into the grave will rise again. That crumbles into dust. Its particles enter into new combinations, and help to form the bodies of plants and animals and of other human beings. Nor is the body which we possess when we die the only body which we have had. We have had many bodies. Why should this our latest body be regarded as more representative of our self than any of the others?[2] In many cases, where in old age it is weak and decaying, it is less representative of the fullness and vigour of our personality. St. Paul says in answer to an objector, who wanted to know from what source we were to obtain our future bodies, "God giveth it a body" (1 Cor. xv. 38). Can we in any way further define that statement? There would seem to be two possibilities. Continuity is an essential element in personality. The self of the old man is continuous with the self of the same man when he was young. There is an identity, or permanence in change, and personal immortality implies that this continuity extends to the future life. Is there to be continuity of body and outward form? St. Paul in 1 Corinthians xv. certainly implies that there was this bodily continuity in the case of Christ's resurrection. The body put into the tomb was the body raised, whatever changes came over it. He also

[1] The phrase in the Creed of the Baptismal Service, "the resurrection of the flesh," is a far more unsatisfactory form of expression.

[2] Cp. Sir Oliver Lodge, *op. cit.*, who pertinently asks this question.

surely implies that there will be this continuity in our own case, when he says, "it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption," and again when he says later on in the same chapter of those who will be living at the great day, "we shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed". Change implies the existence of an element of permanence; it implies continuity. Unless there were some element of permanence we should not recognize change as change. The illustration of the seed used by St. Paul suggests the same thing. There is physical continuity between the seed sown and the body into which it develops. Here a definite material basis exists out of which the new organism springs. One possibility therefore is to argue that the continuity of the resurrection body with the earthly body is assured, because there is, as in the case of the seed, some material basis which connects the two bodies. There seem, however, to be grave difficulties in this view. What is this assumed material basis? Where does it reside? Is not death the dissolution of all the material elements of the body? It is just here that the analogy of the seed breaks down. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." But the seed does not die. If it died it could not grow. The life-principle remains in it throughout; all that you have here is the decay of the outer husk, while the living embryo starts on its career of new growth. There is throughout strict continuity of material substance. We fall back therefore on the second possibility, which, though it is a mere speculation, is at least conceivable. May it not be that, as we are continuously building up our earthly bodies,

so at the same time we are making our future bodies? What we call matter exists in varying degrees of crassness. Gas is matter, so is granite. In our bodies we have hard bone, softer sinew, fluid blood, and vaporous breath.[1] It is not impossible that we are making for ourselves, either within the particles of the existing body or outside it, a "spiritual" body of a finer material. The merits of such a hypothesis are twofold. On the one hand it preserves continuity. The "soul" does not enter into the next state of existence naked and unclothed, and have then to begin making an appropriate body for itself, but takes with it the heavenly body which it has made here. On the other hand it adds a moral seriousness to our earthly living, if we hold that here and now we are making for ourselves the body which shall hereafter be the instrument of our spirit. For while the good man will be making a body which shall be a worthy instrument of his high purposes, the bad man will be making a body appropriate to his evil character.

There is yet a third possibility. We may take the phrase "God giveth it a body" as implying that hereafter, by an instantaneous act of creative power, God will fit each soul as it leaves earth with its appropriate heavenly body. Those who incline to accept the Creationist doctrine of soul, which teaches that for the origin of our souls we must look to a creative act of God, who, when the body of the embryo or infant is ready for its reception, implants the soul, will probably be drawn to this view. The Traducianist, on the other hand, who maintains that,

[1] Cp. Griffith Jones, *Faith and Immortality*, p. 316.

as the body of the child is derived from its parents, so is the soul derived from their souls, will probably have more sympathy with the view outlined above. For that view emphasizes the element of continuity which seems to be a principle of all life, bodily or spiritual. The problem is of course insoluble by us. We can only guess, but our guesses may have varying degrees of rationality and probability. All I have been concerned to suggest is that, while reason demands that body shall always be an accompaniment of spirit, imagination can, without offending reason, picture to itself how the resurrection body may come into being.

We return now to consider the resurrection of Jesus. The Christian belief is that the body which was raised was the body which lay in the tomb. But the risen body was different from the earthly body. A change had come over it. It was unhampered by material restrictions, and had more of the character of what St. Paul calls a "spiritual" body. What was the nature of the connexion between the two bodies? Can we in any way explain it? Again, where is the risen body now? Can we, without doing violence to reason, accept the statement of Article IV: "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again His body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature; wherewith He ascended into Heaven"?

Before discussing these problems, it may be well if we deal with an objection which some may feel to the statement that our bodies will not leave their

graves. If Christ's body left the tomb must we not hold that our bodies will do the same? Why, however, should we be compelled to assert this? Why should it follow that our resurrection will take the precise form which Christ's resurrection took? The problem which we have to investigate in connexion with our Lord's resurrection is in the main the problem of what we mean when we say that the risen body was the same as the buried body, and in discussing that problem we may find that sameness does not necessarily imply an identity of phenomenal material substance. But let us assume for the moment that there was this identity. I see no reason why, because there was this identity in Christ's case, we must maintain that it must be present in our own. Some continuity indeed we demand between our earthly and heavenly bodies, but the mode of the two resurrections need not be similar. If by rising from the dead Christ wished to establish the general truth of resurrection and to make the truth plain to the world, it may well have been that His resurrection took a form which would serve as a sign to convince. An empty tomb would certainly have considerable evidential value.

Now our Lord's appearances after the resurrection vary considerably in the degree of their materiality. We read that after His conversation with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus "He vanished out of their sight" (Luke xxiv. 31). In the Upper Room He appears suddenly before the disciples without giving notice of His approach; a fact which popular belief interprets by saying that He possessed the

power of passing through the walls or closed door of the room. But St. Luke tells us in the same passage that, when the disciples were frightened because they thought that they saw a spirit, Jesus reassured them, "See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having. And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands and his feet." He went on to ask for food, and when they gave Him a broiled fish, "he took it and did eat before them" (xxiv. 36-43). St. Thomas in the same Upper Room eight days later was invited to feel the nail-prints in the hands and the scar in the side (John xx. 27). By the lake-side He shared a meal with His disciples (John xxi. 13). Can we reconcile statements like these with St. Paul's teaching about the spiritual body, or impart any measure of consistency into the narrative? Or must we attribute the stories to the work of a loving and reverent imagination?

We may perhaps be helped to some partial understanding of the difficulties, if we think for a little about matter and spirit, and the relation between them.

(*a*) We do not know what spirit is, but we associate with the term a double set of ideas. There is first the idea of independence. A spirit is "for itself". As Lotze says, "it alone feels and represents itself as the common centre of its own states".[1] When we call ourselves spirits we imply that we possess self-consciousness. But, secondly, this independence involves the notion of productive power.

[1] *The Philosophy of Religion*, Conybeare's trans., p. 93.

A spirit is a centre of creative energy. It initiates action, it controls matter and uses matter to subserve its purposes. Spirit is characterized by volitional activity. Freedom is the idea which most completely expresses its nature. As between matter and spirit primacy belongs to the latter. Matter is the vehicle or instrument through which spirit manifests its inherent activity. Self-manifestation or self-communication is natural to spirit. The progress of physical science is progress in the control of matter, which is made increasingly subservient to practical ends. The greater the control, the greater will be the results achieved. If there was complete control of matter by spirit, such as we believed Christ to have possessed, matter would reveal a plasticity far beyond anything of which we have present experience. What we call miracle would be the natural mode of operation for a being gifted with this complete control.

(*b*) What is matter? Here, again, we have to confess ignorance. The modern investigation of matter, however, has gone a long way towards establishing what we can only call paradoxically its immateriality. The latest analysis of matter connects it closely with electricity, though the electrical theory of matter lies at present outside the region of verification. Matter and energy are two fundamental existences, and we do not know what either of them is, but we have moved far away from the common-sense view of matter as something gross and solid. Matter in its phenomenal manifestations is experienced by us in varying degrees of crassness. The particles of a bar of iron, for example, cohere so closely that we can

with difficulty break the bar. Wood yields more easily, butter more easily still. We can pass our hand through a column of smoke without meeting with any appreciable measure of resistance. And the same matter can take various forms, as when water becomes ice or vapour. Not many years ago science believed that there were certain ultimate chemical elements which could not be further reduced to a common measure. We have since learned through investigations into the activity of radium that the transmutation of the elements is a fact. We do not know, however, what the real nature of the elements is, nor has transmutation been proved except in the case of the radio-elements. But the fact that any transmutation occurs reinforces the belief that ultimately there is one common basis for all kinds of matter. Science is moving towards the conclusion that there exists one elementary underlying substance which enters into various combinations, and assumes various manifestations. The very law, therefore, of the being of matter would seem to be plasticity or variability. Matter manifests itself in various phenomenal ways which we apprehend under the ideas of solidity, colour, and the like. The ultimate constitution of matter is such that it permits of these variable manifestations. We have to dispossess our minds of the notion of fixity or rigidity in connexion with matter, and to think of it rather as plastic and malleable.

(*c*) Let us consider now more closely the contrast which we habitually make between matter and spirit, between the physical and the spiritual. It may be

that we shall discover that the contrast is not so marked as we commonly suppose it to be. The food I eat is matter. A piece of bread is a thing. Now, first of all, what do we mean by a thing? We mean, I suppose, that it is something really existing, which occupies a definite position in space and persists in time. We think of it as a unity; we emphasize the invariability of its figure. A ball lying on the ground occupies a fixed position in space. Nothing else can occupy the same space. If you throw the ball it changes its position in space all the time during which it is moving, but it remains a ball. It has the same form and unity when it comes to rest which it had before. But what of the water in a bowl? Is it a thing? If so, when you pour it from the bowl into a jug it changes its form, for the shape of the jug is different from the shape of the bowl. But the water remains with the same mass or volume. Definition therefore in terms of form is clearly not adequate to explain what we mean by a thing, though it remains a most important element in our meaning. Its inadequacy can be still further seen if we ask ourselves whether we can in all cases, or indeed ever, accurately determine the spatial boundaries of a thing. Is a heap of turnips a thing? You can take away one or more of the turnips. Do the remainder make a thing and is it the same thing if its configuration has changed? What of a tree? It remains the same tree if you remove some of its branches. And what do you include in the being of the tree? Do you include the air found in its interstices, or the earth adhering to its roots? The human body, we are told, is enveloped

in an aura which projects from it into space. Is this part of the body? If so, how far does it extend? Is it not ultimately continuous with the atmosphere which we are constantly breathing into our lungs? Is not the atmosphere strictly part of us? It would seem to be largely a matter of choice where we draw the boundaries of a thing.[1]

In addition to our notion of identical figure as constituting the meaning of a thing, we think of a thing as possessing properties or qualities. It is a unity of properties. It is one thing, a unity, which is present to several senses at the same time. It gives off to the different senses, in virtue of its various properties, different expressions of itself, which our minds unify as belonging to the thing, because they affect us in a consistent manner, and are referred to the same spatial boundaries. The properties of the thing are all contained within the spatial outlines of the thing. But these properties are activities or agencies which are known by what they do or effect. Heat, light, motion are agencies, and so it is with any property of a thing.[2] Hence it is that things undergo change, not merely change of position, but interior change. A living body, for example, is in continual process of transformation. A new problem is here raised as to what we mean by a thing. The thing, we say, remains the same throughout its changes. But what keeps it the same? What is the element of per-

[1] In this analysis of a thing I am to a considerable extent following Sigwart. Cp. his *Logic*, vol. ii. § 72. Dendy's trans.

[2] Cp. *Philosophical Lectures and Remains of Richard Lewis Nettleship*, vol. i., "Spirit" in "Miscellaneous Papers".

manence under the change? Substance, it is sometimes said, remains permanent, while its properties change. But what is substance? Is it anything different from the sum of its properties which together make up the totality of the thing? Do we not call the thing the same despite its changes, because we observe a continuity of processes within the same spatial boundaries? The search for some mysterious basis of properties called substance, which is different from the properties, and yet on which they depend, is a fruitless search. We are simply hunting for an abstraction. The substance of a thing is the sum-total of its properties. It is the thing conceived as a unity.

Things then are complexes of agencies. Matter is characterized by perpetual activity. But activity we found to be the mark of Spirit. Are we therefore right in drawing such a sharp distinction between the physical and the spiritual? We know more about physical agency than we do about spiritual, for we have been able to apply to it methods of quantitative measurement of energy, and can so describe more accurately what it does.[1] But we do not know what physical energy really is. Why should it not be spiritual energy, if we may for the moment apply a physical term to spirit?[2] Spiritual agency, as we know it in ourselves, is characterized by freedom. It is creative. Physical energy is transmitted energy. A

[1] Cp. Nettleship, *loc. cit.*

[2] There are grave objections to applying physical conceptions to spirit. The point is discussed a little later in this chapter. I have used the term spiritual energy here only for purposes of exposition.

thing acts because some impulsion is applied to it from without. But would not the activity of a freely acting spirit, which acted with consistent purpose, express itself in uniform ways? May not the most rigid laws of nature be the manifestation of free spirit acting uniformly?

Let us return now to our piece of bread. What happens to it when we eat it? Our bodies assimilate it. The matter of which it is composed is taken up into our systems and is there converted into something different. It passes into the blood-stream and becomes part of our living selves. You cannot set a limit to the range of its influence. If it helps to make bone or muscle, may it not also truly be said to help to make thought? We are dealing with one continuous process of transformation by which one form of activity is changed into another, and that into a third, and so on endlessly, without any break or gap. As Nettleship puts it: "But the truth is (however absurd it may sound at first) that there is no *one* thing, 'bread,' beginning to be 'bread' at a certain point and ceasing to be 'bread' at a certain other point. The properties (i.e. forces or agencies) which make 'bread' as it is in the loaf, become quite different when 'bread' is in a stomach, and quite different again when it is blood and muscle and nerve, and quite different again when it is feeling and thought and emotion of various kinds. And there is *absolute continuity* in all these changes, though the agency at any given moment is quite different from what it is at any other given moment."[1] But if matter, which we ordinarily think

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 25.

of as being at the opposite pole from spirit, can thus undergo transformations which are spiritual, can we press so rigidly the contrast between the two?

If we try to sum up the results of this somewhat lengthy digression we reach these conclusions. First, the popular view of the world as consisting of an assemblage of separate things or objects will not hold. The boundaries of things are largely arbitrary. It is better to think of one whole of matter which we experience as a complex of temporary centres of activities called things. Secondly, we have to reconsider the distinction made by an earlier philosophy between a substance and its properties or qualities. Substance apart from its properties is an abstraction, a figment of the imagination. The thing is the sum total of its properties unified by our minds. Thirdly, all the properties of a thing turn out on analysis to be agencies or activities. A thing is what it does, it is a nexus or complex of activities. Fourthly, though science is ignorant of the ultimate nature of matter, its investigations show that matter is in a perpetual state of activity. Its molecules are in continual motion. Lastly, the discovery of radio-activity has quickened the hope of the scientific man that one day he will be able to show that all matter consists of various combinations of one underlying, primary material or "protyle". It cannot, however, be too strongly emphasized that science is ignorant of the ultimate nature of matter, and that in its analysis of matter it is largely dealing with abstractions. "The theory of the electric atom does not do more than represent the

unknown reality in a faithfully symbolical matter. It is a working thought-model."[1]

(*d*) Can we say anything more about the origin of matter? We were not present when what we call the creation of the universe took place, and so have to confess ignorance. Yet there are certain things which we can say; and it is important to make them clear if we are to think rightly about the relation of spirit and matter.

We cannot accept any hypothesis which gives matter an existence independent of the will of God. We cannot believe that there was some material already existing upon which God exercised His organizing power. Nothing is independent of God. Even the free human spirit lives and moves and has its being in Him. By his doctrine of creation the Christian theologian utters his protest against the dualism of Greek thought, and seeks to maintain the truth of the primacy of God. Nor can we hold that God first made matter and then gave it orderly structure. We are compelled to distinguish between matter and form, but these are really abstractions made in the interests of logic. It is as impossible that matter should first be formless and subsequently have form added to it, "as that there should be a movement which lacked direction at first, and only acquired it later".[2] By whatever activity God first called matter into being, by that same activity He gave it form. This, how-

[1] Prof. Thomson in *Introduction to Science*, pp. 136-7 (Home University Library).

[2] Lotze, *The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 101, trans. by Conybeare.

ever, does not mean that we cannot trace a development in the history of the universe. The matter of which the universe is composed has undergone a long process of transformations, which it is the work of science to describe. We are speaking here only of what we call the original act of creation. Again, we become involved in difficulties if we call the universe God's work. It is His work in the sense that it proceeded from Him and expresses His mind and will. But He cannot be thought of as making it in the way in which a human workman makes a box. In the first place, the human carpenter is dealing with a material which he finds ready to hand and did not create. In the second place, he meets with resistance in the material, and has to subdue it to his purposes. In a measure it is alien to him, though it is also akin to him, or he could not handle it at all. But with God conception and execution of a plan cannot be separated. "He spake and it was done." "The Divine will does not work out its result, but *is* that result. . . . If we drop all notion of mediating activity or of work, or of action that goes out of itself, and regard as equivalent Divine volition and its consummation, then we can imagine the living pervasion of the creature by the Creator, and boundless enjoyment by the Deity of His own creation."[1]

Once more, we cannot think of God as having made the universe, and then leaving it to itself to develop by its own inherent powers. God is perpetually sustaining the universe, perpetually creating anew. This is what we really imply when we speak

[1] Lotze, *Microcosmus*, vol. ii. p. 703. English ed.

of His immanence in nature. Immanence is a spatial term, which cannot in strictness be applied to God. A box can be within a larger box, but God cannot be locally within His works. What we mean by the expression is that He is unceasingly causally active. Matter has no properties which it possesses in independence of the spiritual source whence it came. Matter is the expression of the spiritual activity which sustains it.

We reach here the fundamental problem raised by the notion of Creation. The problem is twofold. Had Creation a beginning? Did God begin at a certain moment of time to create the universe, having before that moment lived in self-sufficiency? Does creation imply the calling into being of matter out of nothing? We cannot surely think of God as beginning to create at a definite point in time. In the first place, there are grave difficulties in applying the thought of moments of time to the life of God. Is not time a mode of finite existence? In the second place, we arrive at an altogether incorrect thought of God if we place Him outside the universe, and treat the latter as an effect entirely separate from the cause which produced it. We at once ask who made God? We find ourselves confronted with an endless regress. God is not the first term in a series, and to speak of a *First* Cause is really to reduce God to the level of a particular fact. It is better, as Professor Pringle-Pattison has recently pointed out, to speak in this connexion of "ground" rather than "cause". "God is cause only in the sense of ground, that is to say, the Being whose nature is expressed in the

system as a whole. In other words, God is cause only when *causa* = *ratio*, for the reason or ultimate explanation of anything is only to be found in the whole nature of the system in which it is included."[1] If we think this out we shall see that, though our present universe, the present system whose evolution is going on before our eyes, had a beginning, creation had no beginning. Creation is an eternal act; it is the perpetual self-expression of the Divine nature. Thus there never was a time when God was not manifesting Himself through created being. Self-revelation is an essential attribute of God, and the Christian conception of God as Love makes it easier for us to think of God as continually creative, for love must ever have an object for its exercise. The thought therefore which underlies the notion of creation is that of self-manifestation, or self-revelation.[2] We pass away from the view which sets God and the universe in an external relation, and think rather of the universe as the revelation of God to finite spirits. God eternally expresses or realizes His nature through created things and persons. The coming into being of finite spirits is the true purpose of creation, for they alone can appreciate the significance of the Divine self-revelation. We have still to ask, however, what matter is. Whence came it? Was it made out of nothing? Or is it spirit? How is it that the Divine Spirit is able to create this medium for His self-manifestation? We can give no answer to these questions. But we can be on our guard against the tendency to think of spirit as some very tenuous or filmy kind

[1] *The Idea of God*, p. 302. [2] *Ibid.* p. 308.

of matter. In their desire to break down the antithesis of spirit and matter some writers have pictured spirit as matter in its most immaterial form. But this is to deliver oneself into the hands of materialism. Matter, however much you thin it out, is still matter, and you cannot equate it with spirit without robbing spirit of its meaning. In considering the antithesis between spirit and matter we must take our stand on the former. That has primacy. It is non-spatial, and cannot be interpreted in terms of matter. Matter is its instrument. We do not, then, know what matter is, nor how it came into being. But (and this is the important point) we have seen that it is a plastic instrument, whose phenomenal manifestations may be very varied, as varied as the spiritual purposes of the agency behind it. Need we, then, regard it as being rigidly fixed in its properties? Matter, as we know it, certainly has fixed properties. Nature has its uniformities of operation which we call laws. If it had not, knowledge would be impossible. If anything might happen at any moment no orderly life could be built up, and the universe would cease to be a rational whole. But is there any necessity why spirit, from which matter emanates, and on which it continuously depends, should always express itself through a matter possessed of the particular properties which we know it to have? The post-resurrection appearances of Christ suggest the very opposite, suggest that spirit in full control of matter is free to body itself forth in ways of which we at present have no experience.

We have now to consider these appearances. In what I am about to write I have borrowed freely from

a most interesting and suggestive article by Rev. Robert Vaughan, which appeared in the *Church Quarterly Review* for January, 1916, entitled "After His Resurrection".[1] Bearing in mind what has been said about matter and its dependence on spirit, and postulating in the case of our Lord a complete control over matter by spirit, we shall not find any insuperable difficulty in the fact that the appearances varied greatly. How could He at one moment vanish from sight, and at another be clothed with flesh and bones? May we not reasonably hold that, just because He had complete control of matter, He could at will make it assume the consistency of body, or contrariwise withdraw Himself altogether from phenomenal manifestation?

Let us examine the appearances to Mary Magdalene in the garden, and to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. It has been asked from what source came the clothes in which Jesus appeared as a gardener to Mary, or the wayfarer's dress in which He appeared to the two companions. As Vaughan points out, we cannot hold that He obtained some real gardener's clothes and put them on. That were to make an impossible blending of the natural and supernatural. "The clothing then did not come out of or consist of any material substance," that is earthly

[1] May I be allowed to express a hope that the writer of this article will reprint it in separate form; or, better still, write a book on the Resurrection on the lines of the article? The author will, I hope, forgive me for using his article so freely. I was much attracted by it, because it harmonized so closely with my own thoughts upon the subject of the appearances.

material substance; but it came from Christ's Person. He created the reality of the clothes. Mary saw this reality under the phenomenal form of clothes. Behind this appearance was that which made the appearance possible, the matter given forth from the Person of Christ, which He created by an act of will; just as the matter of which the universe is composed came forth from God. So was it also with the traveller's dress on the Emmaus road. The Spirit of Jesus bodied itself forth in such fashion that to the eyes of the two friends He appeared in the guise of a fellow-traveller. We know that spirit does control matter, and we have to believe that God created matter to be the medium of His self-revelation. We are only arguing that Christ's control of matter included the power belonging to God, and which possibly may hereafter belong to us in the other world, of giving out from His own Person the essence of matter, which assumed, according to circumstances, various phenomenal expressions.

Now the article which we are considering maintains (and this, I take it, is the heart and kernel of it) that underneath the record of the appearances can be traced the inner law which regulates the whole series and binds them into a consistent unity. What is this law? The writer thus describes it: "The form which spiritual substance takes is adapted to the mind to which it expresses itself, and changes into its more expressive or truthful form when the spiritual apprehension is correct". Let us see what is involved in this statement and how far the stories in the Gospels bear it out.

Two assumptions are made. The first is that spirit

can give off a material expression of itself. Christ's control of matter included the power to create out of His own Person the substance which we call matter. We have seen already that, unless we are to give matter an existence independent of God, we must believe that God called matter into being. It came forth from Him. And we have seen that by creation we mean not so much creation out of nothing, as eternal self-manifestation. Matter is spirit's expression of itself. Can we create matter? No, not in the sense in which God created it; but we are continually making our own bodies and changing the form which matter assumes. Matter is to some extent a plastic instrument in our hands, and will become more so as our control of it grows. The second assumption is that spirit in manifesting itself through matter is not tied to any particular form. Spirit, says Vaughan, "is not in form by its own nature, but can give off form, and is not then limited to a particular form". Nor need spirit's expression of itself be continuous. It may be, and was in Christ's case, intermittent. "He vanished out of their sight"; He withdrew Himself, that is, from phenomenal manifestation.[1]

[1] We have argued that creation is an eternal act. God, that is, has eternally been manifesting Himself in a universe. Does the statement that Christ withdrew Himself from sight, and that the action of spirit in giving off form may be intermittent, contradict the above? Must not spirit always have some outward manifestation? There is, I think, no contradiction. The intermittency of the action is relative to the human observer. Christ withdrew Himself from the sight of His disciples. His spirit no longer acted on their plane of phenomenal observation. It may

Accepting these assumptions we may go on to examine some of the appearances. Mary in the garden saw what she thought was a gardener. What she saw was something real and objective; it was not merely a subjective creation of her fancy. This reality, which proceeded forth from Christ's Person, took for her the form of a man in gardener's clothes. Doubtless she had had the gardener in mind, and had wondered if he could perhaps explain to her the removal of the body. It was natural, therefore, that she should at first interpret what she saw as the gardener. Then Christ spoke to her. She recognized Him, and at once the phenomenon of the gardener ceased to be seen. She now gave a different interpretation to the reality before her. She grasped its real significance, as her spiritual apprehension grew clear. With this clearing of her spiritual eye the form which the Person of Christ gave out changed, and became such that she was able to interpret it correctly. The two travellers to Emmaus, becoming aware of some one else on the road, naturally thought of Him as a traveller. Christ gave out from Himself that which for them took the phenomenal appearance of a wayfarer. Subsequently, when they recognized Him in the breaking of the bread, He vanished. Spirit withdrew into itself the matter which it had previously given forth. This matter had been given forth in two forms; first, the form which the companions saw as a traveller; secondly, the form which they recognized as Christ, when His conversation had enlightened

have had, indeed must have had, if our argument is sound, some expression of itself, though this need not have been spatial.

their spiritual understanding. The disciples in the Upper Room were thinking about Jesus. He appeared to them in familiar form with the scars on hands and feet. The manifestation matched the thoughts of their minds. Similarly with the two women on their way to deliver the angel's message. They recognized Him at once, for they were full of the hope that He was alive, and expected to see Him. His manifestation of Himself to them was in accordance with their spiritual condition. Once more the appearance by the Sea of Tiberias was appropriate to the circumstances. If the disciples had caught any fish they would naturally wish to sell them. They see a figure on the beach, and hear the question, "Children, have ye any meat?" Their thoughts at once made them interpret the figure as that of a stranger, who had come to buy fish. Later they recognized Him, but "here, again, the familiar form is not presented until the inner sense of the personality is correct. And it is the disciple of affectionate nature and intuitive mind, the undeveloped seer of Patmos, who first finds the truth."

"So when they got out upon the land, they see a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread." Whence came these material things? We must answer again that they came from the Person of Christ. Vaughan on this point writes as follows. I quote his words for their beauty and suggestiveness. Not all, probably, will be ready to accept his interpretation :—

"But the food which Christ had prepared for them was not out of the natural. He could tell them how

to come by that as the miracle showed; but they needed more than the bread which perisheth, so He provided His own meat, just the meat they needed. For was not their spiritual life in need of its own proper sustenance, of the sustenance which, in its perfect gift, is able to 'preserve . . . body and soul'? The fire and the bread and the fish were from out of the personality of Christ, who, as we have seen, can give being to things. The personal presence of Jehovah became fire to Moses; and the Child born in Bethlehem made His presence visible by the Star. The food for the tired disciples, weak in body and in faith, is in itself—may I venture to say?—the substance of the Lord's own self; and the fire that love which makes it fitting food for man. It may be that there is more than that in these spiritual things. I am not wishful to tie down the fact to my own measure of perception; because there is no one and sole expression of spiritual entities."

"And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish. And he took it, and did eat before them." What are we to say of this incident recorded by St. Luke? We must assume that when He took the food into His hands He changed its substance so that it could be assimilated by His spiritual body. If we keep steadily in mind the spiritual origin of matter, and remember that matter owes at each moment its continuance to spirit, it ceases to be incredible that at Christ's touch the food should become spiritualized. If food can become spirit, if there is one unbroken process of transformation from the initial stages of digestion to the activities of mind and will, it is not impossible to

believe that one possessed of Christ's control of matter could convert the food at once into the spirit which it had in it the capacity ultimately to become.

We have seen that spirit is characterized by freedom. If the personality of Christ is the supreme example of personality, showing us what personality in its fullness of power implies, we should naturally expect to find in Him a plenitude of free activity. This is what the narratives suggest that we do find. His control of matter is complete. In almost all the records of His appearances He is described as being suddenly present. He does not approach or draw near. He is there. This is because as spirit He was not in space, though when He appeared to the disciples they saw Him in space. In no other way could they perceive Him.

Now if this freedom of self-manifestation is the essential principle of spirit, then, as we read these narratives, we may cease to regard them as transporting us into a world of magic or conjuring tricks. We may view them rather as giving us a glimpse into the character of the spiritual world. What seems strangely supernatural to us on our present plane of existence may be entirely natural on a higher plane. We ourselves look forward to the acquisition hereafter of enlarged spiritual powers, when we are freed from the limitations imposed on us by the possession of our present bodies. The body is the organ through which our spiritual activity manifests itself. But the body hampers the spirit. We feel that with a finer instrument we could achieve greater results. When the spiritual body of which St. Paul speaks becomes ours

spirit will have more scope for the exercise of its freedom.

To the materialist, or to one who has not carefully considered what the primacy of spirit means as a philosophical principle, speculations such as these will probably appear absurd and extravagant. So much turns on the pre-suppositions with which we approach any subject of inquiry. But to one who finds in personality the key to the meaning of the universe any form of materialism is an impossible creed. "The world," says Wilfred Richmond, "is no longer to science the dead and rigid system of known mechanical laws, but rather the very field of wonder, where expectation is awake to greet the new facts and principles which are unfolding themselves, and nothing is too strange or too unexpected to be true. Is all this revelation of wonder to go for nothing, to be rolled up and thrown away, the cast-off garment of reality, and not rather 'der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid,' the revealing medium from which will break, within which will unfold themselves the further revelations of the life to come?"[1]

Matter "the revealing medium" of spirit. Let us once grasp that, let us once admit that personality, being the highest category we know, is therefore the most adequate principle in the light of which we are to interpret reality, and we shall freely concede that the uniformities of nature's operation on this phenomenal plane of existence provide no adequate key to

[1] From a pamphlet entitled *The Risen Body*, which deals most thoughtfully with the difficulties involved in the narrative of the appearances, and with St. Paul's teaching about the spiritual body.

the problem of ultimate being. Belief in the story of our Lord's resurrection will still be an act of faith, but it will not be an unreasonable faith. For in our own spiritual activity, and in our partial but increasing control of matter, we shall find the clue which will reveal to us, so far as we can at present understand it, the nature of ultimate reality. We are spirit, and spirit is prophetic, not only of its own continuance after death but of an increasing self-manifestation and freedom, when the limitations of our present bodily existence are removed.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF IMMORTALITY.

CHRIST came to establish a kingdom, and His resurrection is a pledge of the continuance of that kingdom. The thought of the kingdom implies the thought of the fellowship of all believers, who form one body, a whole animated by one life derived from Christ. No one would wish for an immortality for himself alone. Indeed, our desire for continuance springs in great measure from the craving to be reunited with those whom we have loved on earth. Let us consider more in detail the implications of immortality in its social aspect.

We have first to distinguish carefully between individuality and personality. Every person is an individual. He is a unique centre of volition and emotion, and is possessed of self-consciousness, which means that he is aware of himself as himself, as different from every other person. So fundamental is this thought of personality that we unhesitatingly regard as abnormal those dissociations of personality which provide such a puzzle for psychology. In a dissociated personality there appear to be two or more selves which in turn dominate the life, so that the individual affected is the possessor of diverse streams of consciousness which refuse to coalesce. But we are

apt to forget that all which is most individual in personality owes its existence to relationships with other persons. If to be a person means that you are this unique centre of emotion and volition and self-consciousness, it is equally true that the content of your personal experience is derived from your intercourse with your fellows and with the world of nature. Without these relationships with others you would be nothing, a mere abstraction. Your selfhood, in the very moment in which you affirm it, carries with it a reference to other selves with whom you are in living relationship. The most intimate and private of our experiences are those which religion affords, when the soul is alone with God. But it is just here that the privacy of personality is most invaded. The soul is not alone. It is holding communion with another Person, a communion more close and penetrating than any communion with a human friend; for the barriers which divide us from our fellows, even from those with whom we are in nearest association, melt away when God pervades our being.

Love is the crown of human emotion, and love means fellowship. The man who loves seeks to blend his personality with that of another. He retains his individuality, but his aim is to go out from his isolation and to enter into relationship with some one else. The isolated individual, however, is a fiction. No such being ever existed or can exist. When we are born we are born into a family and into a world of social relationships, and our growth is largely determined by the influences which come to us from without. Society takes the new-born life and

moulds it, before it is aware of what is happening. When the child is old enough to take stock of itself, it finds that it is part of a great whole from which it draws its life.

These are commonplaces of thought, but we do well to emphasize them because the modern world has until quite recently tended to be too individualistic in its outlook, whether in philosophy, religion, politics, or economics. We are learning a better way of thinking now, and the reaction against individualism will help us to understand more clearly what personality implies.[1]

Now, if it is true that personality means fellowship, then the growth of personality must mean increase in the capacity for fellowship. A man may cut himself off from his kind, he may determine to live a solitary life, but what is the result? His character suffers; his self becomes a meagre, narrow thing. We all instinctively condemn the shirker who refuses to shoulder the common burden, or to live the life of the true citizen and neighbour. We call him selfish. The very epithet indicates that the self is meant to expand and find its real life in widening its relationships. Who is the great man, the man who seems to us most truly to fulfil his function and purpose? It is the man whose relationships with the world outside him are most numerous and varied, who has saved his life by losing it. His individuality is all the more marked and intense just because he has under-

[1] For an analysis of the social meaning of personality cp. Wilfred Richmond's *An Essay on Personality as a Philosophical Principle.*

stood the social implications of personality. The centre of the circle is glowing with richness because from the circumference have poured in upon it influences which have quickened its life.

The pursuit of knowledge illustrates the truth that nothing in the universe is isolated. To know anything is to understand the relationships of the thing, to see that special bit of knowledge in its manifold connexion with the whole of knowledge. The realm of truth is an organic realm, all of whose parts cohere together and form a system. We test any new piece of knowledge which comes to us by seeing if it will harmonize with the body of truth which we already know. If it cannot find its due place in the system of the whole we reject it, or accept it only provisionally, waiting until further investigation reveals its connexion with the rest of truth. What is true of knowledge is true of humanity.

Humanity is a whole, and to treat the individual in isolation is to sever him from that which gives him life and makes him what he is.

The teaching of Christianity in this matter is very plain. (*a*) Jesus laid down the principle that if a man would find his life, or save his soul, he must lose it.[1] The capacity for fellowship is in every one. It is, as we have seen, the very dynamic of personality. And this capacity must be exercised in the service of humanity. The true Christian is one who, inspired by love, seeks to enter into relationships of love and service with his neighbours. The circle of his interests

[1] John xii. 24, 25; Matt. xvi. 24-7.

will continually enlarge as he goes out of himself to find his true life in fellowship with others.

(*b*) Love is to be the supreme motive of the Christian, and by love is meant, not a thin sentiment or vague emotion, but a masterful energy, very practical in its operation. Love sees and reverences personality in another, and seeks to enable that personality to develop. It will do nothing to harm a brother man, but it will not rest content with this negative attitude. On the contrary, it will seek his good in positive ways, thus multiplying the ties which bind men together.

(*c*) Love is the supreme theological or metaphysical principle of Christianity. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."[1] And the God of the Christian is no isolated Being living in solitary splendour, but has within Himself social relationships, and expresses Himself in an eternal activity of love. The doctrine of Father, Son, Spirit, Three Persons in One Godhead, is our endeavour to express in the best terms we can use this sociality of the Divine life. It reminds us that the ideal of personality is something far beyond the limited human personality which we know in ourselves. God is more personal than we are, because His life is an energy of love which is ever weaving new relationships with His creation.

(*d*) Again, Christianity sets forth Christ as the source of life for men. Union with Him, so that we receive His life, is the essence of discipleship. There is one body, of which He is the head and we are the

[1] John iii. 16.

members. Through Him, through our common sharing of His life, we are brought into closer union with each other. It is a fact of experience that men are drawn together in proportion as they participate in a common devotion to a cause or a person, and as the devotion grows so does the unity. Christianity is the religion of a society. Its whole outlook is social. It knows nothing of the isolated individual, but regards each man as a member of a kingdom of God which in ideal embraces all humanity.

How do these considerations affect our belief in immortality? Must we not look forward to an increased sociality as part of the innermost meaning of eternal life? The New Testament pictures the heavenly life as a life of service, as indeed it must be if love is the heavenly motive. May we not hope that hereafter we shall understand one another better, and be knit more closely together because our devotion to Christ will be more pure? So will be realized the great high-priestly prayer "that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one".[1] And who can say that an intenser sympathy with each other may not hereafter be rendered more possible through the transfiguration of our material bodies? The body here, while it is the instrument of our communion with each other, is also a barrier and divides us. At times the physical appearance of a person repels us. With a body less grossly material more delicate sympathies may be possible. Interchange of thought and emotion may be more quick and living. Signs are

[1] John xvii. 22-3.

not wanting that even here we have much to learn about the power of mind to communicate with mind, without any apparent physical medium.

Certain systems of religion and philosophy have held that our destiny will be one of absorption into deity, that we shall lose our individuality and become mere moments in the life of God. Such a creed neither satisfies the instincts of our hearts, nor does justice to our reasoned conviction of the worth of personality and the place which it holds in the scheme of the universe. But the question is sometimes asked —If growth is the law of personality, and if the capacity for further growth is increased with every advance made in growth, can you set any limits to the process? May not our ultimate destiny be an expansion of personality so great that we shall see the whole as God sees it? And if that could come about should we not cease to be ourselves? For we are ourselves just in virtue of our limitations. Remove the limitations, and do you not remove the personality as we know it?

The possible range of our future development is of course unknown. But, to put it at the lowest, it is unlikely that the creature can ever attain to the stature of the Creator in knowledge, to say nothing of power. We may leave such speculations alone. What, however, it is important to emphasize is the fact that the widening of my relationships does not make me less a person, but more a person. The more I recognize and live out my affinities with the whole, whether of nature or humanity, the more intensely personal do I become. My experience grows richer, but it is still

my experience, which I continuously affirm, and to which I react in my own unique fashion. The love which hereafter will make me lose myself in service of the whole will only enrich my own being. Immortality, while it implies increased sociality, at the same time implies increased personality.

We may summarize as follows the thoughts of this chapter. A Divine purpose, we believe, is at work in the world. That purpose in the light of Christianity we interpret as the creation of a kingdom of moral personalities. God is educating humanity, is drawing men into closer fellowship with Himself and with each other. Religion is our recognition of our place in the whole scheme, and of the part which we have to play in carrying out the purpose of God. Each man has his own work to do, his own niche to fill in the temple of humanity. The immortality to which we look forward must carry with it increased fellowship and a multiplying of common ties of interest and sympathy. For only by such increase of fellowship can personality fulfil its inherent capacity for communion with others. We hope hereafter for a clearer vision of the whole and of our place in it. "In thy light shall we see light." We look forward to a quickened sense of our oneness with the whole as we become more open channels for the flow of the Divine love. Eternal life is a life of growing fellowship with God and with humanity, and of a completer realization of the Divine purpose.[1]

[1] In Pringle-Pattison's Gifford Lectures, *The Idea of God*, there is an admirable lecture (xviii.), "Time and Eternity," in which he shows how the idea of purpose underlies that of eternity.

CHAPTER V.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST AND THE RESURRECTION.

HISTORICAL facts underlie the doctrines of Christianity and give them their vitality. No theory alone, no religion based merely on ideas, can have either the force or the range of appeal possessed by a religion which is grounded on definite happenings in history. Spiritual experience is indeed its own witness, but can such inward experience be trusted always to maintain itself in the face of doubt? Unsupported by outward concrete fact, is it not in danger, either of disappearing altogether, or of becoming a thin and dreamy sentiment?

> Eternal hopes are man's
> Which, when they should maintain themselves aloft,
> Want due consistence: like a pillar of smoke
> That with majestic energy from earth
> Rises, but, having reached the thinner air,
> Melts and dissolves, and is no longer seen.[1]

Notably is it the case that the doctrine of the Resurrection derives its power from the triumph of the first Easter Day. The fact that Christ rose from the dead had upon the early disciples a transforming effect which it is difficult to over-estimate. They became missionaries of the new faith because of this

[1] Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, Bk. iv.

fact. Their whole outlook upon life was changed when they were assured that their Master had conquered death. A glad and confident belief in the Easter victory was the foundation upon which the Christian Church was built. Human immortality was unquestionably affirmed by Christ in His teaching, but the significance of that teaching was incalculably heightened by the fact that the Teacher Himself died and rose again. Hope and guess were converted into certainty. The world of idea was linked with the world of fact. History confirmed speculation; the unseen took concrete form in the seen. It is not difficult to imagine what loss would be ours if we were to-day to reach the conclusion that the doctrine of Christ's Resurrection was merely the creation of pious fancy. Problems, perhaps insoluble, may always remain as to the mode or manner of the Resurrection, as to the consistency of the records, and the like; but if you remove the fact you change Christianity out of recognition.

Now that a man, even a solitary one, should have risen from the dead, if it could be established, would be a fact of transcendent importance for the human race; but it would mean far less than it means that Christ rose, for in the Christian creed Christ is more than a man. The power flowing from Christ's Resurrection is vitally connected with the whole conception of His Person.

Let us try to see something of what it means for us that Christ rose from the dead, and what richness of truth springs from the fact that He linked immortality with His own Person, both by His victory

over the grave, and by such utterances as "I am the resurrection, and the life";[1] "Because I live, ye shall live also";[2] "I am the living bread which came down out of heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever".[3]

We must begin by fixing our attention upon two preliminary considerations.

(*a*) The first has to do with the nature of Christian discipleship. The Christian is one who is the recipient of a communicated life. Life comes to him from a source beyond himself. It is the gift of Christ. To follow Christ is something more than to make Him our pattern or example. Who indeed unaided could hope to model his life successfully on a type so far above him? Would not the very perfection of the example mock our feeble efforts? But imitation of a model is not the heart of Christian discipleship. This, on the other hand, is found in self-surrender to a power greater than our own, and in personal union with an inexhaustible fount of life. Jesus Himself in the allegory of the vine and the branches has defined the essence of the Christian life. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit in itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much

[1] John xi. 25. [2] *Ibid.* xiv. 19.

[3] *Ibid.* vi. 51. There is, of course, doubt as to how far the writer of the Fourth Gospel is reporting the actual words of Christ. But the sayings which I have quoted are in the deepest accord with the spiritual significance of the Resurrection and of the Person of Christ.

fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing."[1] The teaching of St. Paul is the same. He speaks of Christ being "formed" in his converts,[2] prays that "Christ may dwell in your hearts,"[3] and says of himself, "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me".[4] Christian experience all down the centuries gives a similar testimony. It is an experience of men and women who are conscious that they receive life from Christ, and have proved the truth of His word, "I am come that they may have life".[5]

(*b*) The experience of the disciple leads us back to the claim made by the Master. No more tremendous claim was ever made. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."[6] Christ asserts that all truth is to be found in Himself; that all ways of living, which are not evil, meet in Himself; and that He is the source of life for all the world. In a word (though no one word can sum up the full meaning of such an utterance), the Divine purpose for the world is to be found in Christ, a purpose which St. Paul thus describes: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a dispensation of the fullness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth".[7]

This Divine purpose is not yet realized; it is an ideal towards which we move. It is a purpose of progress and advance, which is best characterized by the idea of life, for life implies movement and activity.

[1] John xv. 4, 5. [2] Gal. iv. 19. [3] Eph. iii. 17.
[4] Gal. ii. 20. [5] John x. 10. [6] *Ibid.* xiv. 6.
[7] Eph. i. 9, 10.

Behind the conception of Christ as the Way and the Truth lies the deeper conception of Christ as the Life. You cannot more completely describe Christ's work, or the object of His coming, than by saying that He came to give life. This life He can give to the world because He is in Himself an eternal source of life. As Dr. Hort has pointed out, the process of life in Christ's description of it has three stages. First, within the very Godhead is the eternal activity of life: "As the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself".[1] Secondly, the living Son gives His life to men: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me."[2] Thirdly, men in their turn are to be channels for distributing this life: "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water".[3] The life communicated is the life of One who is the primal source of life for all nature and all humanity. Life in its lowliest manifestation, as well as life in its highest mode of spiritual activity, is derived from the personal centre of all life. Viewed through Christian eyes the course of humanity, which often seems to us so planless and chaotic, is being directed to a goal. A way runs through it, the way of Christ. A power inspires it, the power of the living Christ, who communicates His life to the world, that He may draw it into closer union with Himself. In any study which we

[1] John v. 26. [2] *Ibid.* vi. 57.

[3] *Ibid.* vii. 38. The reference is to Hort's Hulsean Lectures, *The Way, the Truth, and the Life*, p. 109.

may make of the Resurrection this thought of Christ as the Life is central.

With these considerations in mind let us now see what meaning the Resurrection of Christ may have for us.

1. The loneliness and isolation of the individual disappears. "We mortal millions live alone," said Matthew Arnold.[1] In a very real sense that is true, when we consider each individual as a unique being in relation to his fellows. The formula of self-consciousness is "I am I," and I can be no one else. My emotions are my own, my will is my own, my character has its special peculiarities, my sin and my remorse belong to me individually. Though we are "members one of another," and though we are perhaps learning that personality is not so impenetrable or impervious a thing as it has been thought to be, still it remains a fact, the root-fact indeed which characterizes personality, that in the deepest core of our being, down at the "red-ripe of the heart," we are solitary beings. But this is true only as regards our relation to our fellow-men. It is emphatically not true of our relation to God or Christ. For "in him we live and move and have our being,"[2] and Christ is "the light which lighteth every man coming into the world".[3] Who can draw a line to mark off when the human ends and the Divine begins? If Christ is the universal life-giver, then my natural life is perpetually derived from Him, as my spiritual life ought to be, unless I choose to cut myself off from His gifts. The isolated human being is then no longer

[1] *Switzerland.* [2] Acts xvii. 28. [3] John i. 9.

isolated. He is in Christ, and Christ is waiting to reveal that fact to him. Of all the lonely experiences through which we pass death is the loneliest. There is a natural shrinking from it. It is strange and unknown, a secret which none can communicate to another. But if Christ conquered death, and if He now lives, He can turn that loneliness into fellowship. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me."[1] There is surely an immense spring of hope and comfort here.

2. To all of us in some reflective hour comes the haunting sense of life's transiency.

> Our little systems have their day;
> They have their day, and cease to be.

What are we? Whence came we, and whither do we go? Is it worth while to strive and struggle, when death draws near so fast and our place shall know us no more? But the Resurrection assures us that the human being is not transient, but endures. "Because I live, ye shall live also." Our personality will survive the grave, as Christ's survived. Hence we need not regard it as a mockery that our ideals here are unattainable, because tasks now unaccomplished may reach their fulfilment hereafter. The incompleteness of human life on earth has been a common theme for poets and moralists. As we have already seen, the very fact of this incompleteness in a being such as man is a powerful witness to his immortality. But, leaving on one side for the moment

[1] Ps. xxiii. 4.

that argument, we see how in the light of the Resurrection the seemingly transient individual becomes assured of his permanence. Death is the ante-room to a larger life. Man's fragmentary endeavours after truth, beauty, goodness, contain within them the prophecy of their complete realization in an existence beyond the grave.

3. The individual, in a word, wins a new sense of his worth and dignity. The Incarnation shed a flood of fresh light on the value of the human being. The humanity which Christ wore is no longer a thing to be despised. But the Resurrection has immensely increased our sense of its value by showing it to be part of an eternal order. Such a poem as Tennyson's *In Memoriam* reveals the doubts which are called up by the discoveries of science as to the age and vastness of the physical universe, and by the successful prosecution of materialistic modes of inquiry. We to-day feel these doubts less than did an earlier generation. Science is less dogmatically materialistic in tone. But the doubts are at times still there, as they were in simpler fashion to the writer of Psalm viii., and they need an antidote. The fact of the Resurrection sweeps them away; for it proclaims the high moral and spiritual worth of man, reinforces the teaching of Jesus upon the value of the individual, and gives every human being a place in an abiding spiritual universe.

Are we not justified in holding that each human being has his own special place in the Divine scheme? Individuality is written plain on the face of Nature, though science for her own purposes arranges things

in classes, and labels them with a common label. No two blades of grass are alike; no two leaves on the same tree have a precisely similar structure. Nature is a scene of infinite variety. And as you mount higher in the scale of being this individuality is more marked, until in man it reaches its climax. When your friend dies you are not content to speak of him as a member of humanity who has perished, nor are you at all consoled by the reflection that, though he is gone, the life of the race endures. You demand that he shall endure. For while he lived your friend was unlike anyone else. He was just himself in face, form, gesture, and above all, character. His worth for you consisted in the fact of his uniqueness, and it is against the destruction of his unique personality that you protest.

We are unable to say with any certainty at what point in the scale of being survival-value emerges. Are the lower animals, or any of them, immortal? But we have no hesitation in demanding immortality for man on the ground of his worth as a spiritual being. We defy death to destroy a creature of such achievement, and such capacity. Upon all such hopes and convictions the Resurrection sets a fitting seal.

4. The essence of Christian discipleship consists, as we have seen, in the reception of a communicated life. Of what kind is this life? It cannot be adequately described in words. Life always outruns and eludes descriptive analysis. This communicated life must be experienced before it can be known. But it is something more than natural life which is its

basis and also Christ's gift. It is life higher in quality and power, involving a quickening of the emotions and a reinvigoration of the will and reason. He who receives this gift of life from Christ is lifted to a new level; his personality is enriched in all its powers. And such is the quality of the life that it is prophetic of its own continuance. It is Christ's life, and the Resurrection shows Christ to be eternal.

Immortality and eternal life are frequently used as synonymous terms; but while the traditional connotation of immortality is unendingness, eternal life suggests quality; and it is the thought of quality which predominates in the New Testament use of the phrase.[1] "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life."[2] "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."[3] "He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life."[4] Eternal life is spoken of as a present possession. It may be had here and now from Christ, and because of its quality it will endure. A study of the passages in St. John's writings (and it is he who more specially presents Christ as the life-giver) makes it clear that we can draw no hard and fast line between eternal life as a present and as a future possession. Nor is this surprising, if we fix our attention upon its qualitative aspect. For in so far as the human personality is transformed by the gift of a higher life, the two existences, the earthly

[1] We cannot, however, entirely exclude the element of time. See chap. vii.

[2] John iii. 36. [3] *Ibid.* xvii. 3. [4] 1 John v. 11, 12.

and the heavenly, become one in kind. In essence they are the same, because they are derived from the same source. Owing, however, to earthly limitations the manifestation of eternal life in us here below is less complete than we believe it will be hereafter, where opportunity for growth and service will be greater. That the life of heaven will be in many respects different from the life of earth we have every ground for believing. The mode of Christ's life on earth after the Resurrection may be taken as an indication of this; as also His word, "in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven".[1] It is, however, open to question whether traditional theology has not pressed to an extreme the contrast between the two lives. Continuity is the law of life, and it may well be that the first stages of our growth hereafter will present more affinities with our present existence than we are accustomed to allow. This, however, is a speculative problem which admits of no certain solution, and has but little practical bearing on our lives. What is of vital import, is to reflect how in the light of the assurance of eternal life our daily actions gain immeasurably in significance. We are builders for eternity. An eternal purpose is working itself out in our lives, and all we do or think or say is related to it. The dreariest duty shines with a new colour if you view it *sub specie aeternitatis*. The smallest growth in character contains within itself the promise of final perfection. Christ's Resurrection opens up before man a vision of spiritual development to which

[1] Matt. xxii. 30.

no limit can be set. The light of heaven sheds a constant illumination upon the things of earth.

5. So do we learn what St. Paul meant when he spoke of "the power of his resurrection".[1] Life is power. Natural life manifests itself by what it does, by its energy and activity. In like manner, the life of the risen Christ communicated to men is a source of power. It will be sufficient for our present purpose to indicate two ways in which this power is shown. (*a*) It is a power for holiness and the formation of character. St. Paul writes: "For if we have become united with him by the likeness of his death, we shall be also by the likeness of his resurrection. . . . But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. . . . Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus."[2] Here the renewal of our moral nature is effected through our union with the living Christ. In the power of His Resurrection we are to walk with Him in "newness of life". The Resurrection and the Cross cannot be separated. The victory of Christ over death was a victory over sin, and its fruits are for us to gather. Christ died for humanity, and He rose for humanity, that through the power of His life we may climb to nobler levels of character. The story of Christian experience is the story of a moral renewal effected by the risen Redeemer. (*b*) It is a power for service, as the Apostles discovered. For if a new gift of life is available for men the Christian must wish to make that fact known. He must desire to convert himself

[1] Phil. iii. 10. [2] Rom. vi. 5-11.

into a channel for the diffusion of this life. Men will work for their fellows with high devotion without any Christian ideal to guide them or Christian hope to inspire them, but the temper of truly Christian service should be more enthusiastic and courageous just because this reserve of power is available for the worker, and because the content of his ideal is so much richer.

'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
And the pale weaver through his windows seen
In Spitalfields, looked thrice dispirited.

I met a preacher there I knew, and said:
"Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this scene?"—
"Bravely!" said he, "for I of late have been
Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ, *the living bread.*" [1]

6. Finally, and summing up all that has been said above, is the experience which underlies the words, "I am the resurrection and the life". A Person claims Himself to be the life. The attraction of Christ's personality is the centre fact of Christianity. But who can analyse it satisfactorily? Who can explain the attraction of one human friend for another? We move here in a region of emotion which lies too deep for logic. Christianity makes its appeal to the whole man. Its doctrine of eternal life is not divorced from knowledge, but in common with all religion it makes a special appeal to emotion. The Person of Christ has an emotional significance reaching far beyond sentiment. If He attracts He at the same time makes a moral demand on the will and stimulates the

[1] Matthew Arnold's Sonnet, *East London.*

mind to fathom the speculative problem which He presents.[1] But it is to emotion as expressive of the whole living personality He appeals most persuasively. Phrases such as the friendship or companionship of Christ enshrine a true living experience. They speak of trust, love, self-committal to One wiser and more loving than ourselves. And in the face of bereavement and death the mourner finds an unfailing spring of comfort in the fact that Christ passed through the valley of the shadow. "And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades."[2] He has the keys. It is enough. The soul says: "I have trusted Him so far for life's journey, and He has not failed me; I will trust Him for the beyond".

In a passage of great beauty and profound insight, Dr. Hort writes as follows about Christ's word, "I am the way".—"The antithesis 'I' and 'the Way' is the pregnant paradox which knits existence together. On the one hand devotion to a person, human or divine, seems in our best moments the all in all of life. Yet it fades and becomes an unreality or a disease when it is not translated into wide and diffusive operation: conversely all worlds of operation fatigue and desolate and come to vanity. In our finiteness we are driven to oscillate between the person and the world, whatever world it may be. But Christ's word exhibits them as meeting in Him. He the most

[1] Cp. *The Fact of Christ*, by P. Carnegie Simpson.

[2] Rev. i. 17, 18.

personal of persons, is also the dominating centre of every world. Most of all is this true of Him as the way, apparently the most impersonal of all conceptions."[1]

We could not in this passage substitute Life for Way, for life is a far less impersonal conception. Indeed life may be said to be one of our most personal categories, for we best know life through being ourselves alive. It is because we thus know it that we tend to interpret it elsewhere in terms of ourselves. We may, however, say that Christ takes a conception whose richest meaning is found in personality, and intensifies that meaning by linking it with His own Person. He, in whom the ideal of human personality finds its fulfilment, stands over against our finite personalities in presence of the death which seems to destroy them, and asserts that death has no power to destroy, but that, linked with Him and sharing His life, we are heirs of immortality. Systems of religion which teach that the final destiny of man is to lose his personality by being merged in God, or in some general soul of the universe, fail to make good the deepest demands of our human nature. The strength of Christianity lies in the fact that it not only affirms the continuance of our personality, but offers in Christ a satisfaction for the varied needs of human nature. We as persons can find our true goal and ideal only in a Person. In Christ men have met with One who satisfies the deepest impulses of their being. Reason sees in Him the truth; will and conscience bow before His moral authority, and He evokes the love which

[1] *The Way, the Truth, the Life*, p. 200.

is the crown of our emotional nature. But while Christ satisfies He always inspires to further growth. Personality finds its dynamic force in Him. There is ever a beyond of achievement to which He calls us. And the Resurrection is the fitting complement to His work upon us, for it promises to latent capacity a boundless opportunity for future development.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS OF THE BELIEF IN A FUTURE LIFE.

THE reticence of Jesus on the subject of the future life is very marked. He has told us little or nothing to satisfy the natural curiosity which we feel about it. Of the central fact of our immortality He clearly assures us, and speaks in grave terms of judgment to come and of the solemnity which belongs to the choices and decisions of this present life. But He gives no description of our future existence,[1] of the place of our abode, of all the many details which an eager inquisitiveness would like to understand. Such descriptive language as He does use is borrowed from contemporary Jewish speech, but He employs this sparingly. The reserve is deliberate; for had He wished to enlarge upon the subject He had ample material to hand in the eschatological beliefs of His day. Anyone who contrasts His silence with the exuberance of Jewish speculation upon the future state must surely feel that an attitude of reverent agnosticism best befits us as we face the uncertainties of the unknown.

[1] In Matthew xxii. 30 He says: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven".

It is strange (and yet perhaps not altogether strange, seeing what a fascination the subject possesses for many minds) that so much should have been written about these things, that there should be so much positive assertion which has really very little to support it, that so much labour and ingenuity should have been expended in building up structures whose foundations turn out upon examination to be very insecure. Is not one reason for this speculative restlessness to be found in the fact that the Christian Church has never clearly distinguished between the traditional element in its eschatology and the great central truths which form the moral and religious basis of its assurance of immortality? The traditional element is large. The early Church took over from the Jews not a little of their eschatology, and this has come down to us, modified no doubt by Christian thought, but with much of its original meaning and associations. It is this traditional element which provides the material for the speculative exercise of pious fancy.

Revision of theological beliefs is a duty constantly incumbent on the Church, and never more so than to-day, when the work of an army of scholars has enabled us to become familiar with the Jewish background against which Christianity emerged. It is possible now, as never before, to study the writings of the New Testament in their true perspective, to estimate how much they owe to contemporary Jewish literature, and how far they are coloured by the popular opinions current at the time when they were composed. In the development of Christian thought a

double process is at work. There is both assimilation and rejection. New knowledge has to be incorporated with the old, and as this new knowledge increases there is need for the sloughing off of certain elements which have come down from the past, and can be no longer fused into a consistent whole with the fresh truth. A living theology will be perpetually critical of its own development, just as a living organism is perpetually casting away its outworn tissues and shaping for itself new expressions of its life.

I have spoken of the dogmatism which characterizes many speculative writings on the future state. I am anxious to avoid falling myself into the same error. Denials may be as dogmatic as affirmations. If what follows seems to be too negative in tone, I can only plead that I have done my best to weigh the evidence, and to state fairly the conclusions to which it seems to me to point. After all, these traditional elements are not of the essence of the faith, and it is well to learn to distinguish between the essential and the accidental. Failure to do this must at times result in mental distress for many, who thus become painfully aware of the opposition between traditional beliefs and newer methods of presenting Christian truth.

Among the traditional elements in the doctrine of a future life we have first to discuss the meaning of the terms *Paradise*, *Gehenna*, *Abraham's Bosom*. We shall then pass on to consider the problems of the *Intermediate State* and the *Second Advent*.

1. *Paradise* is a word, probably of Persian derivation, which had the original meaning of park or garden. It is so used in the LXX, as in Nehemiah ii. 8,

"the king's forest," or in Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 30, "as a conduit into a garden". It is also used in the LXX of the garden of Eden, and of the plain of the Jordan which was like "the garden of the Lord" (Gen. xiii. 10); and it occurs in Ezekiel xxxi. 8, where we read that "the cedars in the garden of God could not hide" the Assyrian, who is pictured as a lofty cedar of Lebanon. We can trace here some development in the ideas associated with the word, which gathers about itself thoughts of beauty and of a Divine abode, until in the New Testament it has come to signify definitely a home of future bliss and happiness, of rest and reward for the righteous after death.[1]

The actual term, however, is found only three times in the New Testament; (*a*) Our Lord on the cross says to the dying malefactor: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43). (*b*) St. Paul writes: "I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. . . . I know such a man, how that he was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words" (2 Cor. xii. 4). (*c*) The promise to the Church in Ephesus runs: "To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God" (Rev. ii. 7).

But when we turn to the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical writings of the period 200 B.C.-A.D. 100, which provided in our Lord's time the materials of popular eschatology, we find, not only a constant employment of the term, but an immense variety in the

[1] Cp. Salmond, *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, pp. 278-80. I am indebted to this book for some of the matter of this chapter.

meanings attached to it. The more philosophical minds used it with a symbolical reference to spiritual qualities and blessings. Popular thought tended rather to a crude literalism, and ran riot in its speculations about the position of Paradise, whether it was on earth, or in heaven, or in the underworld ; whether there were several Paradises ; who were its inhabitants, what the nature of their bliss ; what trees and flowers grew there, with many other imaginings of the same kind.

To discuss the problems connected with the conception of Paradise in these writings would be out of place here.[1] Nor is such discussion needed. Enough has been said to make clear two points. First, the crudity and variety of the ideas connected with it rendered it an eminently unsuitable term for Jesus to employ. It lent itself readily to misconceptions. The popular mind is always slow to liberate itself from its traditional beliefs. The purer morality and religion which Jesus came to teach would have suffered had He presented His teaching in such a framework. Secondly, we have to distinguish between the revealed elements in the Bible and the elements which belong to what we call by contrast natural religion. The eschatology of Judaism has its roots in the Old Testament, but for much of Old Testament eschatology we have to go to the ethnic faiths of the Semite peoples.

[1] The subject may be studied in Salmond, *op. cit.* ; in Charles's *Eschatology, Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian* ; and in the article " Paradise " in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible.* There is a useful note in Box's *The Ezra-Apocalypse*, pp. 195-7.

These provide many of the ideas which meet us in the subsequent development of the religion, and also the imaginative setting of the ideas. And this is notably the case in regard to the problem of the future life; for it was just here that, at any rate up to the time of the exile, Hebrew faith was thin and weak. Belief in immortality was only slowly achieved by the nation. In striking contrast to the splendour of their doctrine of God, which lifts the prophets above all contemporary teachers of religion, and makes us speak of them as the vehicles of a special revelation, is the meagreness of their belief about the future life. Here they were almost entirely dependent upon what an inherited natural religion could provide. In estimating the teaching of Christianity about immortality we have always to remember that a distinction must be drawn between the moral and religious significance of the conception, and the traditional elements in its presentation. The latter may be discarded without the former suffering any real loss. Let us now briefly examine the uses of the word Paradise in the New Testament.

(*a*) Jesus, as has been stated, employed the term only once in His message of hope to the dying thief. What meaning did He intend to convey? We have no ground for supposing that He meant to convey to the thief's mind more than an assurance that rest and happiness awaited him after death. The thief would attach to the term the ideas it suggested in the popular eschatology. He may have thought of Paradise as being either a division of the underworld, where the good were waiting in happiness for the day of final

award, or as a heavenly abode to which select souls such as Moses or Enoch had been already translated; for both these beliefs about it are found in the literature of the time. But, when we take into consideration the conditions under which Jesus spoke, it is difficult to believe that He used the term with any specific doctrinal or theological connotation. He wanted to heal a troubled spirit, and to give a message of comfort to a dying criminal. It was the state of the latter's mind which determined His usage of the word. And He used a term which would give the thief the hope he needed.[1] We cannot read into the term more than a confirmation of the general hope of humanity that heaven spells peace and a cessation of the struggle and trials of earthly existence.

(*b*) St. Paul's use of the word is entirely different. He is speaking of "visions and revelations," and of a mystical experience which came to him, when in rapture he was "caught up even to the third heaven". It is uncertain whether St. Paul identified Paradise with the third heaven or not. The Jews believed in a plurality of heavens. "In the earlier form of this doctrine there were three, in the later form (which was already current in the first century A.D.; cf. 2 Enoch) there were seven heavens."[2] What St. Paul is describing is a spiritual experience of communion with God, one of those moments of intense religious rapture when all earthly surroundings are forgotten, and the soul realizes the near presence of the Divine. If the Apostle intended to indicate locality by the term,

[1] Cp. Salmond, *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, p. 281.

[2] Box, *The Ezra-Apocalypse*, note on p. 14.

the reference must be to the abode of God, and not to any dwelling-place of departed spirits.

(*c*) The passage in Revelation recalls the picture in Genesis of the garden of Eden with the tree of life. One of the Jewish beliefs was that the original Paradise of Adam was still in existence in some hidden spot on the earth, or withdrawn from earth into heaven, and that it was kept safely guarded until the great day of judgment, when it would be opened for the reception of the righteous. Reference to the tree of life is frequent in the apocalyptic writings; and it is twice again mentioned in this book, once where it is described as growing on the banks of the river of life and yielding its leaves "for the healing of the nations,"[1] and also in the following passage: "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life".[2] The meaning here is clear. Paradise stands for the reward of blessedness which awaits the redeemed. It indicates the consummation of the work of redemption which is the age-long travail of God.

We have scant material in these three New Testament passages for any theological construction. They belong to the world of poetry and religious feeling, and we do violence to them if we use them in any other reference, or forget that Paradise is a conception of Jewish eschatology, which carried its Jewish meaning with it into Christianity.

2. *Gehenna* originally meant the Valley of Hinnom to the south and south-west of Jerusalem. It was here that Ahaz offered human sacrifices "and burnt

[1] xxii. 2. [2] xxii. 14.

his children in the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen" (2 Chron. xxviii. 3). Josiah put an end to these idolatrous practices and defiled the valley (2 Kings xxiii. 10), but they were revived later under Jehoiakim. It is uncertain whether it was the rubbish heap of the town, where garbage and the dead bodies of animals were burned.[1] But it was a place of evil historical associations, and as such eminently suitable for the religious ideas of punishment and retribution which subsequently become associated with it. Though the term itself is not used by Isaiah there is a plain reference to it in the following passage (lxvi. 24): "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh". Here it indicates the punishment which awaited unfaithful Jews. The same thought meets us frequently in apocalyptic literature. Thus in 1 Enoch (xxvii. 2, 3) we read: "This accursed valley is for those who are accursed for ever: here shall all the accursed be gathered together who utter with their lips against the Lord unseemly words and of His glory speak hard things. Here shall they be gathered together, and here shall be their place of judgment. In the last days there shall be upon them the spectacle of righteous judgment in the presence of the righteous for ever."[2] In the *Ezra-Apocalypse* it

[1] Cp. Driver's article "Gehenna" in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible.*

[2] Charles's translation in S.P.C.K. "Translations of Early Documents," Series I, *The Book of Enoch.*

is pictured as a place of punishment, not only for apostate Jews, but for the wicked of all nations. "And there shall the pit of torment appear, and over against it the place of refreshment; the furnace of Gehenna shall be made manifest, and over against it the Paradise of delight. And there shall the Most High say to the nations that have been raised (from the dead): Look now, and consider whom ye have denied, whom ye have not served, whose commandments ye have despised. Look, now, before (you): here delight and refreshment, there fire and torments!" (vii. 36-38).[1] The picture of Gehenna in these apocalyptic writings varies in its details. Sometimes it is thought of as a place of corporal and spiritual punishment, sometimes as a place of spiritual punishment only; but the punishment is conceived as everlasting; though in later Judaism the conception of a purgatory for faithless Jews, as opposed to Gentiles, comes to the front. There is yet a chance for these to enter Paradise after they have been purified through suffering.

Gehenna in the New Testament is always used for the place of punishment into which after the last judgment the wicked are finally cast. It is a scene of torment, pictured as "unquenchable fire" (Mark xxv. 43), as "outer darkness" (Matt. viii. 12), as the abode of the worm which dieth not (Mark ix. 48), as a "lake of fire that burneth with brimstone" (Rev. xix. 20), as the place of "the weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xxii. 13). The punishment is conceived as being final and unending. We

[1] Box's translation.

shall have something to say in the next chapter about our Lord's use of this traditional symbolism. Meanwhile none can deny the extreme gravity of His words about the fate of the unrepentant sinner.

3. *Abraham's Bosom* occurs in the New Testament only in the parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke xvi.). It is uncertain what it indicates, whether a division of the underworld where the good have some foretaste of the blessedness of heaven, or the place of final bliss. There was a Jewish belief that souls in the intermediate state were in one of two compartments in the underworld, suffering penalty if they were evil, or reward if they were righteous. Their condition here was anticipatory of their final state. But "regarding the intermediate state of the soul the commonest form of belief among the Pharisees was that the souls of the righteous departed immediately into Paradise, those of the wicked into Gehenna where they awaited the final judgment".[1] Where this view obtained, Abraham's Bosom would refer to the heavenly Paradise and not to any locality in the underworld of the intermediate state. The imagery of the parable suggests blessedness and a place of honour.[2]

4. *The Intermediate State.*—There is probably no doctrine of the future life where traditional Christianity has been more influenced by Jewish beliefs than the doctrine of the intermediate state; yet nowhere are the reserve and silence of Christ more marked. He gives no formal teaching about it whatever. We

[1] Box, *The Ezra-Apocalypse*, note on p. 120.

[2] Cp. Salmond's article "Abraham's Bosom" in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible.*

have already seen that He uses the word *Paradise* only once in His reply to the dying thief, and we cannot fairly extract from that utterance any doctrinal intention. Nor can we press in a dogmatic interest His use of the term *Hades*. This occurs three times in His reported sayings. (1) "And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades" (Matt. xi. 23). (2) "Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi. 18). The use in these two passages is plainly metaphorical. (3) There remains the parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke xvi.), where we read, "and in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (ver. 23). Can we find in this parable our justification for the doctrine? We must look to the main lesson which the parable teaches. Its object is not to instruct us about the intermediate state, but to show how selfishness in our earthly life leads to misery. If Jesus here makes use of the current Jewish belief in the existence of two divisions of the underworld He does so merely by way of imagery. To enforce His lesson He reproduces the symbolism of contemporary eschatology, but the lesson is the important thing, and not its pictorial setting. The parable again places only the rich man in *Hades;* and we have already seen that *Abraham's Bosom* may mean the heavenly Paradise of final reward. We cannot therefore conclude with any certainty that the imagery of the parable points to an intermediate state for the righteous. Nor can we base the doctrine upon other sayings of Christ.

Two such sayings are commonly quoted by the upholders of the doctrine. One is, "our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep" (John xi. 11). Now sleep is a state of unconsciousness, and if we hold that Jesus was describing the intermediate state as a sleep, we must reject all views which speak of the souls of the departed as being in an anticipatory condition of weal or woe. In sleep, save in periods of dreaming, we neither suffer nor enjoy. But surely it is absurd to look for doctrine in such an utterance. All the world over death has been described as a sleep; and Jesus Himself corrected the misapprehensions of the disciples, who thought that Lazarus had fallen into a natural sleep, by telling them plainly that he was dead. We may note in passing that St. Paul says very little about the intermediate state. He, too, describes it as a sleep, "even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Thess. iv. 14); and elsewhere, "we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51). Here, again, it is more natural to regard sleep as an expression for death. The other utterance of Jesus refers to the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, where Matthew expands the shorter saying of Mark so that it runs, "But whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come" (xii. 32).[1] It is argued that if one sin is unpardonable other sins may be forgiven, and that there is a place for repentance beyond death. The problem of final

[1] Cp. Mark iii. 29; Luke xii. 10.

destiny is discussed in the next chapter. Meanwhile our concern here is merely to determine whether this saying can be adduced as teaching the doctrine of an intermediate state. I cannot see that it has any real bearing upon the subject. It says nothing about such a state. It does not say that other sins will be forgiven hereafter. We may hope that they will, but we are reading into the words a hope which they do not express.[1] Let us suppose such a hope to be well-grounded. We are brought thereby no nearer to any knowledge of the condition of the soul when it leaves the body. We simply have to confess ignorance, and to accept the fact that Jesus said nothing on the matter, and gave no hint that the souls of the departed were kept in some place of waiting for the final award. We shall have subsequently to examine the passage in which St. Peter speaks of Christ preaching to the spirits in prison (1 Pet. iii. 19); but whatever may be the conclusion which we there reach we must remember that Christ Himself maintained an attitude of strict reserve about the Intermediate State. Is it not foolish to try to be wise in such matters?

There are, on the other hand, certain general considerations in connexion with this doctrine which we do well to keep in mind. Christianity presents us with a vision of the final consummation, when the triumph of goodness shall be complete and the perfect kingdom of God shall be established. This consummation is ushered in by the general resurrection

[1] Cp. the note in Plummer's *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew*, pp. 175-80.

and the last judgment. If we are to accept literally the doctrine of a great day of resurrection and testing, then belief in an intermediate state is necessary, for there must be a waiting period for souls until they are summoned to the final assize. But if we treat this picture of the future as an apocalyptic vision which presents the truth about human destiny in a symbolical or imaginative form, then there is no such necessity for belief in an intermediate state, but we may hold that each soul passes immediately at death to its account. Martensen argues that, since the Christian hope includes a belief not only in the resurrection of the body, but in the redemption of the whole cosmic order (Rom. viii. 18-24), an intermediate state is necessary, because the perfecting of the individual cannot be accomplished apart from the general system of nature to which he belongs. Human life is thus lived at three levels or in three spheres—earthly existence, the intermediate state "wherein spirituality and inwardness is the fundamental feature," and finally the heavenly sphere "in which we shall again live in the body, but in a glorified body, and in a glorified nature, which is perfection, the renewal and perfecting of this world to its final goal".[1] The Apocalypse describes the souls of the Christian martyrs as waiting beneath the altar and crying out "How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And the answer comes that they must wait until the number of their fellow-servants and brethren is completed (Rev. vi. 9-11).

[1] *Christian Dogmatics*, § 276.

The unity of the body of believers requires for the perfecting of any one member the perfecting of the whole.[1] Every soul, therefore, when it quits the state of earthly existence waits until the hour is ripe for the perfecting of the whole community.

Where does it wait? This is a question which cannot be answered; nor should the question be put. For if you ask *where*, you are fashioning for the souls of the departed a world of space and matter which is nothing but a copy of the present material world. "By such notions we retain the departed within those limits and conditions of sense beyond which they certainly are. No barrier of sense separates them from us, for the sphere in which they find themselves differs, *toto genere*, from this material sphere of time and space."[2] Probably the most satisfactory conception of the intermediate state which we can form is that it is a state of self-recollection, in which the soul, faced with new revelations of truth, probes its own depths, and so grows in knowledge of itself and God. This certainly implies development and progress, and suggests the existence of some kind of spiritual purgatory; but, as we have seen, growth is of the very essence of the conception of immortality. Martensen lays great emphasis upon this view of the intermediate state. "The realm of the dead," he writes, "in relation to this world of sense, must be called the *deeper* region. All here moves, not in space or time, but in essence, in inwardness, in subjectiveness; here is the still realm of shades, where life lays bare its

[1] Cp. Heb. xi. 40. [2] Martensen, *loc. cit.*

root, whereas in the upper world it shows only the branches of the tree, its crown and blossom."[1]

5. *The Second Advent.*—The phrase "Second Coming" is not used in Scripture, where we find instead the word *Parousia* which carries with it the double idea of a coming and a presence.[2] The Christ when He comes will come to be permanently present, and to set up a heavenly kingdom which shall endure for ever. The *Parousia* will thus be the consummation of the process of redemption. All things will then be summed up in Christ (Eph. i. 10). Believers will enter into an "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled" (1 Pet. i. 4), and will see the end of their faith, the salvation for which they have longed (1 Pet. i. 9). They will share Christ's glory (Col. iii. 4), and enjoy the blessedness of heaven. The *Parousia* is usually pictured as accompanied by a general resurrection of the dead and a final judgment.

What is the origin of this doctrine? It is unquestionably derived from Jesus's prediction of His own return, though there is a preparation for it both in the Old Testament and in the apocalyptic literature outside the canon. That Jesus foretold His return in glory is certain. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. xxiv. 30). In answer to the high priest He said, "Henceforth ye

[1] Martensen, *loc. cit.*

[2] Cp. article "Parousia" in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, which I have used freely.

shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxvi. 64); and He tells the disciples that "the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds"; and adds, "Verily I say unto you, There be some of them that stand here, which shall in nowise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. xvi. 27, 28).[1] The parable of the tares (Matt. xiii. 6) and the picture of the final judgment in Matthew xxv. enforce the same lesson of a return in glory to punish the wicked and reward the good. Once more, there is the statement at the end of the lament over Jerusalem, "For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. xxiii. 39).

We may glance for a moment at the anticipations of the doctrine in pre-Christian literature. The prophets frequently spoke of a coming of the Day of the Lord, which was to vindicate Jehovah's care for Israel by the overthrow and punishment of the enemies of the nation.[2] It was also to be a day of testing for Israel itself, which would bring judgment and sorrow to the unfaithful.[3] It was to be a day of Divine intervention and decision, when Jehovah Himself would appear in Zion as judge and saviour. It would be accompanied by violent disturbances in nature and by signs in the sky.[4] The passage in the Old Testament which

[1] Cp. Mark viii. 38—ix. 1; Luke ix. 26, 27.

[2] Joel ii. and iii.; cp. Is. ii. 5-22.

[3] Amos v. 18; Is. iv. 4.

[4] Is. ii. 19; Joel ii. 2, 30, 31.

bears the most striking resemblance to our Lord's description of the *Parousia* is in Daniel vii. 13, 14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

It is important to note how many features in the New Testament doctrine are derived from the Old Testament, for the point has a distinct bearing upon the problem whether our Lord's words are to be interpreted literally or symbolically. We find, for example, the description of the dissolution of the heavens in 2 Peter iii. 10 anticipated almost verbally in Isaiah xxxiv. 4. The signs in the heavens of Matthew xxiv. 29 are predicted in Isaiah xiii. 10 and Joel iii. 15. Isaiah lxv. 17 looks forward to the same renewal of nature of which Revelation xxi. 1 speaks. In Daniel xii. 1-3 the great day of God is to be marked by the resurrection of the dead to shame and reward, just as in the New Testament the general resurrection accompanies the *Parousia*.

Apocalyptic literature is full of the thought of coming crisis, and is dominated by the Messianic hope. The writers of this literature were pessimists in their view of the world in which they lived. They saw evil everywhere triumphant. No redemption could come through the slow secular processes of history. There

was no hope for this world, but they had an ardent hope that a new and better world would come. The present order must perish, so that God might establish a new order of righteousness. Hence they looked out of the darkness for the sudden coming of the new age. It was to be a catastrophe brought about by the direct action of the Divine will. The Old Testament writers had not always identified the better time which was coming with the advent of the Messiah, but this identification is made by the Apocalyptists, and it is to them we must trace back the quickened Messianic expectation current in Christ's time. "We study the Apocalypses," says Professor Burkitt, "to learn how our spiritual ancestors hoped against hope that God would make all right in the end; and that we, their children, are here to-day studying them is an indication that their hope was not wholly unfounded."[1]

We can here only summarize in the briefest possible way the teaching of the New Testament on the *Parousia*. (*a*) The most important passage in the Synoptic Gospels, with which for the moment we are alone concerned, is the "Apocalypse of Jesus" in Mark xiii.[2] Here Jesus replies to a question put by the disciples after His statement about the destruction of the Temple, and announces His coming in glory (vv. 26-27). Before He comes there is to be a period of severe tribulation. The destruction of Jerusalem is predicted, and the *Parousia* is to follow after this. (*b*) What is the date of the *Parousia?*

[1] *Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, p. 16. For a parallel to the judgment scene of Matthew xxv. cp. 1 Enoch xlviii.-li.

[2] Cp. Matt. xxiv.; Luke xxi.

Mark (ver. 24) says it follows the destruction of Jerusalem. Matthew (xxiv. 29) says it is to be "immediately after the tribulation of those days". Luke (xxi. 24) speaks of "the times of the Gentiles" being fulfilled in the interval between the fall of the city and the Second Coming. Matthew (xxiv. 14) says, "and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come". Mark also mentions the world-wide preaching (ver. 10), but both he and Matthew seem to place it during the period of tribulation. In Mark (ver. 30) we have the plain statement, "this generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished".[1] Luke also says (xxi. 32), "this generation shall not pass away till all things be accomplished". (*c*) In connexion with these passages we must take certain statements of our Lord: "There be some of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark ix. 1 = Matt. xvi. 28, Luke ix. 27). In Matthew x. 23 we read, "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come"; and in Matthew xxiv. 36 (= Mark xiii. 32), "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only".[2]

Putting together these statements we reach this result. (*a*) All three evangelists agree in stating that Jesus predicted His return in glory. The return would be accompanied by judgment, and would usher in the perfect kingdom. (*b*) All speak of the period

[1] Cp. Matt. xxiv. 34. [2] Cp. Acts i. 7.

of tribulation and of the signs in heaven which were to herald the coming. (*c*) All, following the distinct assertion of Jesus Himself, represent the coming as taking place within the lifetime of the present generation. Its exact day and hour, however, were unknown even to Christ. (*d*) It is difficult to find room for the world-wide preaching to the Gentiles if all these things were to be accomplished in a single generation. If it were not for Luke xxi. 32 we might say that he regarded the *Parousia* as postponed to an indefinite future, in distinction from the other two writers who regard it as immediate.[1]

No one can study the Epistles without seeing how the expectation of a speedy coming to establish the kingdom held an important place in the theology of St. Paul and the other Apostles. The coming is believed to be imminent. "The coming of the Lord is at hand" (James v. 8); "the Lord is at hand" (Phil. iv. 5); "for this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep" (1 Thess. iv. 15); "the end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet. iv. 7). In 1 Corinthians vii. St. Paul urges his readers to be free from worldly cares and anxieties, so that they may be ready for the coming of the Lord.

The *Parousia* is to be accompanied by final judgment, either the judgment of God (Rom. i. 18; ii. 2) or the judgment of Christ (Rom. ii. 16). "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ" (2 Cor. v. 10); "behold the judge standeth before the

[1] Cp. article "Parousia" in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

doors" (James v. 9). The "fiery trial" which is to overtake believers is the beginning of the judgment impending on sinners (1 Pet. iv. 17, 18). In Revelation a distinction is made between two judgments. One is preliminary, the other final, and between the two room is found for a millenial kingdom (xx. 1-6).

But the *Parousia* in the Epistles, though it is accompanied by judgment, is more particularly associated with the thought of salvation and redemption and the establishment of Christ's eternal kingdom. To this St. Peter looks forward when he speaks of "receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1, i. 9), and St. Paul also, who reminds the Ephesians that they have been sealed in the Holy Spirit "unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30). Believers are to share Christ's triumph. "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory" (Col. iii. 4); "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints" (2 Thes. i. 10); "our citizenship is in heaven: from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. iii. 20). The apocalyptic framework is there, but the Apostles have a fuller realization of the spiritual nature of the kingdom, and emphasize this aspect of it.[1]

[1] It has been argued that it is St. Paul's belief in the imminence of the *Parousia* which accounts for his silence about the intermediate state. Where he does refer to it he speaks of it, as we have seen, as a sleep. The passage in 2 Cor. v. should be studied. Here the Apostle writes about the new body which is to be put on at death. Some have suggested that, finding that the *Parousia* did not take place, St. Paul changed his view, and began to grow interested in the condition of the life after death.

Before we discuss the *Parousia* in the Johannine writings, we must deal shortly with some of the problems raised by the presentation of the doctrine in the Synoptic Gospels and Epistles. The fundamental fact which faces us is that Jesus distinctly proclaimed His own return in glory within the lifetime of the generation then living. Was He mistaken? If He was, can we regard Him as a teacher sent from God speaking with authority? Or was He making use of current eschatological language and expectation in order to enforce a deeper spiritual lesson? In other words, did He interpret the apocalyptic Messianic hope in a spiritual, and not a literal sense? How far did the disciples misunderstand Him, and attribute to Him beliefs which they had inherited, but He did not share? How far can we trust the narratives, or distinguish between the teaching of Jesus Himself and that of His followers?

It is impossible here to discuss the difficult textual and exegetical problems involved in this complicated question, and in particular those which gather round the "Apocalypse of Jesus" in Mark xiii. I am concerned rather to state the bare outlines of the question, and suggest some paths along which our thoughts may move as we seek for a solution.

First, what are we to say about the apocalyptic element in Jesus's teaching as a whole? This element has of late been immensely emphasized. Indeed it is true to say that there is no more living issue today in theology than the discussion of this problem. For extremists of the school of Schweitzer the true understanding of the Synoptic narratives depends

upon our realizing clearly that the whole of Jesus's thought was dominated by the belief that the end of the world was coming immediately, before the generation then living had passed away. Schweitzer pictures Jesus as a revolutionary apocalyptist who looked for the sudden establishment of the Messianic kingdom by a supernatural catastrophe. The old order was to vanish, and a new order, of which He was the herald, was to take its place. He says: "Jesus's purpose is to set in motion the eschatological development of history, to let loose the final woes, the confusion and strife, from which shall issue the Parousia, and so to introduce the supra-mundane phase of the eschatological drama. . . . It was with a view to this initial movement that He chose His disciples. They are not His helpers in the work of teaching, we never see them in that capacity, and He did not prepare them to carry on that work after His death. The very fact that He chose just twelve shows that it is a dogmatic idea which He has in mind. He chooses them as those who are destined to hurl the firebrand into the world, and are afterwards, as those who have been the comrades of the unrecognized Messiah, before He came to His kingdom, to be His associates in ruling and judging it."[1]

Hence, argues Schweitzer, His whole ethical teaching requires to be reinterpreted. It was an *Interimsethik*, a system suited only to the brief period which was to elapse before the end came. Jesus never intended to lay down moral principles for the guidance of humanity through a long period of de-

[1] *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, p. 369.

velopment. He spoke for the moment. If the judge stood even then at the door there was no place for progressive moral education.

Schweitzer's extravagances condemn his theory. The apocalyptic element is there in our Lord's teaching, and we must take account of it, but we cannot re-write the Gospels as Schweitzer would have us do. He claims indeed that for eighteen centuries men have been putting their own interpretation on the Gospels instead of allowing them to tell their own story. But what Schweitzer calls the plain story of the Gospels is merely another interpretation of them given by himself. And it is an interpretation which he reaches only by distorting the facts. He omits what does not suit his hypothesis, leaving out, for example, any reference to St. Luke's Gospel; and is constantly twisting the plain meaning of statements so as to make them harmonize with his own views.[1]

Two things must at once strike anyone who is confronted with Schweitzer's hypothesis.

First, can he conceivably be right in what he says about the moral teaching of Jesus? How could an *Interimsethik*, deliberately framed as such, have had the range and power which experience has shown belongs to the ethics of Jesus? His ethical teaching is universal in its scope. Even those who deny the orthodox interpretation of His Person are the first to admit that He laid down moral principles which the world has never outgrown, and whose adaptability to changing conditions of civilization is unquestioned.

[1] There is a valuable criticism of Schweitzer in Emmet's *The Eschatological Question in the Gospels*, to which I am indebted.

Could such a teacher have really thought that He was concerned only with the conduct of His followers for a few brief years? And what of the parables of growth which unfold the nature of the kingdom? You have, on Schweitzer's theory, to explain away in a forced manner these references to the kingdom as something which was to come slowly into being. More prominent than the apocalyptic element in His teaching is His thought of a gradual evolution of the kingdom and a slow leavening of humanity by the new life and spirit which He came to impart.

The second thing which must occur to everyone is, as Emmet points out, that Jesus did not take the view of the existing order which was current among the apocalyptists. They despaired of that order and looked for a sudden catastrophe which was to introduce a new order. They were thoroughgoing pessimists. But there is no pessimism in Jesus. He not only took a hopeful view of men and saw possibilities for good even in the most degraded, but emphasized the Father's love and care for the world, rejoiced in the beauty of nature, and found the world a happy place to live in, because over it and around it spread the atmosphere of the Divine love. If Jesus was an apocalyptist His whole mental and spiritual outlook was entirely different from that of His apocalyptist contemporaries.

What, again, are we to say of a writer who makes Jesus a teacher of one idea? Has any other personality so baffled psychological inquiry by the comprehensiveness of his mind? For large outlook of vision, for poise and balance, where will you find His

equal? It is just because He was so sane and wise that He has wielded His personal power over men through the centuries. To seek for the clue to the mind of Jesus in the hypothesis that His whole outlook on life was dominated by the single conception of the imminence of the *Parousia* is to show at once that Schweitzer has not grasped the nature of the problem before him.

Finally—and this is surely the climax of the paradox—Schweitzer has to admit that "the whole history of 'Christianity' down to the present day, that is to say, the real inner history of it, is based on the delay of the Parousia, the abandonment of eschatology, the progress and completion of the 'de-eschatologizing' of religion which has been connected therewith".[1] In other words, Christianity has flourished and spread by discarding what, according to the theory, was of fundamental importance to its Founder!

But, while we decline to commit ourselves to Schweitzer's guidance, we have still to face the problem of Christ's apocalyptic utterances. How are we to account for the presence of this element in His teaching, and how are we to reconcile it with the teaching as embodied in the parables? When we have allowed for the probability that those who reported His sayings heightened their apocalyptic colour, the fact remains that a return in that generation was predicted by Christ Himself, and has not taken place. Can we say that He was wrong, and that having accepted the conditions imposed by becoming man His knowledge on these matters did

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 358.

not go beyond that of His contemporaries? One advantage accruing from the present controversy over this apocalyptic problem is that it forces theologians to consider anew the implications of His humanity. There are not wanting signs that the whole question of the two natures in Christ will come to the front in the immediate future.[1] Or have we good ground for arguing that He used the current eschatological language merely as a framework for teaching a deeper spiritual truth which the progress of experience would reveal? Was not this a case of putting new wine into old wine-skins? The new wine was sure to burst the skins, but it would not itself perish, as in the parable. Subsequent ages, taught by the Spirit, would learn to distinguish between the form of Christ's teaching and its imperishable essence.

Some help may come from the study of Old Testament prophecy, or from reflection upon the work of any enthusiastic religious teacher and reformer. The element of foreshortening is always present in Hebrew prophecy. The prophet, sure of his cause, sure that one day God will manifest His righteous power, tends to see in contemporary crisis the coming of the end. He forgets the long process of the ages, and filled with enthusiasm proclaims the immediate advent of judgment and the spiritual consummation of his hopes. May not Jesus with His true humanity have done the same? May we not thus interpret His utterance, when the seventy reported the success of their mission, "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven"?

[1] Such a book as Raven's *What Think Ye of Christ?* is symptomatic.

(Luke x. 18). In their success He saw the coming of the final triumph. It was at hand; the victory was as good as won already. The length of the struggle involved is forgotten in the enthusiastic certainty of the present moment.

If we had only the Synoptic Gospels and the Epistles to guide us our difficulties would be greater than they are. But we have St. John, and it is he, surely, who provides us with the clue for which we are searching. He wrote his Gospel[1] under conditions very different from those which obtained when the other Gospels were written. St. Paul was dead, and his generation had passed away. The hope of an immediate *Parousia* had become very faint, and St. John was driven to consider what interpretation he could put upon the apocalyptic utterances of the other Gospels and upon the current presentation of the Messianic hope. The fall of Jerusalem lay behind him. That in part explained some of the utterances. Pentecost, too, had intervened, and here was a real *Parousia*, a coming of Christ in power through the Spirit; and this was no single incident merely, but the inauguration of a spiritual process which was to continue as long as the Church continued. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Christ's perpetual presence with His Church, His perpetual comings in the crises of history and of individual lives—it was upon this St. John fixed as giving the true meaning of Christ's words. It is hard not to

[1] I am not concerned here to discuss the problem of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. The point of view of the Gospel is what matters for our present purpose.

believe that it was with deliberate intention he interpreted the prediction of the *Parousia* as being fulfilled in the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, which marked the beginning of a long series of such outpourings.

With the Fourth Gospel at any rate we are in a different atmosphere. The word *Parousia* occurs only in one passage in the Johannine writings—"and now, my little children, abide in him; that, if he shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 John ii. 28); but an advent at the last day is referred to more than once with the judgment which accompanies it.[1] In the Gospel, however, the emphasis is upon the spiritual coming of Christ to His disciples, which is interpreted as a continuous process. It is not always easy to distinguish the various comings of Christ which are mentioned. "I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you" (xiv. 18). The context shows that this is a spiritual coming through the Paraclete. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself" (xiv. 3). It seems most natural to interpret this as referring to the second coming of Christ, though many commentators have thought that it refers to Christ's coming to the believer at death, or have explained the words in a spiritual sense. "A little while, and ye behold me no more; and again a little while, and ye shall see me" (xvi. 16). Does this point to our Lord's appearances after the Resurrection, or to the fuller spiritual vision which the illumination of the Comforter was to

[1] Cp. v. 29; vi. 40; xxi. 22.

give them? Difficulties of exegesis abound, but the main drift of the Johannine teaching is clear.[1] The cruder conceptions of the Synoptic Gospels are spiritualized. The coming of the kingdom is conceived as a gradual process, which is to be consummated at the last day. The spiritual presence of Christ with His disciples is the subject of central interest. It was this also for St. Paul, but the writer of the Fourth Gospel retains far fewer traces of Jewish eschatology than did his predecessor. When he speaks of judgment he regards it as a process in operation now, which moves naturally to its completion hereafter. "He that believeth on him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil" (iii. 18, 19). The current eschatological conception of judgment is not altogether absent, but it is subordinate to the thought of judgment as a continuous process of moral testing, effected by the presence of the truth to the minds and souls of men.[2] Stevens's concluding words in his chapter on the Johannine Eschatology are worth quoting:—

"It is quite natural that John, according to his mystical method of thought, should lay chief emphasis upon the moral process, since for him the whole work

[1] There is a careful summary of the Johannine Eschatology in Stevens's *The Johannine Theology* which brings out the main principles of the Johannine teaching.

[2] Cp. Stevens, *op. cit.* p. 354.

of redemption, both in its direct and remote effect, is viewed from the standpoint of inward experience and moral development. He sees the future as already implicit in the present ; eternal life as already begun here ; the physical resurrection as part of the Son's complete bestowment of life, which has already taken place for the believer, and the future judgment as but the crisis of a process which is going forward constantly in the life of every man." [1]

With St. John before us, may we not reasonably hold that Jesus used the current eschatological imagery in a spiritual interest and with a spiritual meaning? Do we not create unnecessary difficulties for ourselves by taking His apocalyptic utterances literally? If with His deeper insight, and a spiritual vision so much keener than that of His contemporaries, He was able to give new meaning to old forms of truth, is it likely that in the region of eschatology alone He had nothing fresh to contribute? [2]

Do we lose anything which is really worth preserving if we discard apocalyptic conceptions and imagery and interpret the *Parousia* in a spiritual sense? We lose perhaps something for the imagination, and it will probably be long before the thought of Christendom acquiesces in the abandonment of a belief so deep-rooted as this of the *Parousia* interpreted along the lines of St. Paul and the Synoptic Gospels. But what is the real significance of the belief? What gives it its value? Surely not the imagery, not the coming on clouds of glory, or the great white throne

[1] P. 354.

[2] Cp. article "Parousia" in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible.*

set for judgment with the books open ; but rather the assurance that the Divine purpose will not fail. The kingdom will come in its perfection. Christ will one day, however far off that day may be, sum up all things in Himself. The real value of the doctrine of the *Parousia* lies in the fact that it assures us that the spiritual process of the world is to reach its completion. What more do we want? Nor need we abandon the thought of catastrophe ; for what underlies that thought is the supremacy of the Divine will. It is God who *acts ;* and though He acts slowly and gradually He is not tied to that method of action. It may be that the end will come by some sudden act of God ; it may be that life will slowly perish from the earth with the oncoming of a new glacial epoch. But whatever be the mode of His action it is still His action, direct, personal, purposive. There is nothing more Divine in a sudden appearance in clouds of glory than there is in a long process of spiritual development moving to its completion, directed and controlled at every stage by God. Judgment, again, is sure. The form which the judgment takes matters not. Is it really of significance whether we think of one great assize at which all souls are to be tried, one great day of resurrection when the dead and living are to stand before God, or regard each soul as passing immediately to its judgment when it leaves the earth ? Here again the belief in a great day of final award is very deep rooted. It is part of the Church's traditional inheritance, and many will doubtless be reluctant to abandon it. There may be no necessity to abandon it ; but my point is that we can retain all that is

essential in the thought of final judgment without being compelled to accept the belief in its traditional form. The complete sovereignty of Christ is what the doctrine of the *Parousia* seeks to maintain. All power is His, and that power will hereafter be manifested in its fullness. This is what really matters for the Christian. Expressions of belief may vary with the ages. Christ Himself changes not, and discipleship is union with the unchanging Christ.

CHAPTER VII.

FINAL DESTINY.

AMONG the traditional elements which the Christian Church took over from the Jewish eschatology was the belief that our destiny in the future state is irrevocably determined by our choices in this life. The bad man passed to his eternal punishment, the good man to his eternal reward. The Roman doctrine of Purgatory softened the harshness of this view by opening up wider possibilities of future recovery through the discipline of punishment in an intermediate state. Protestant theology at the Reformation reverted to the older theory, partly in revolt against the abuses of the doctrine of Purgatory, partly because its estimate of the authority of the Bible led it to accept in their literal meaning certain statements about final destiny which occur in the New Testament. The missionary enthusiasm which characterized the Evangelical Revival in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was largely inspired by the belief that the heathen who perished without knowledge of Christ were eternally lost in hell. The traditional view won general acceptance; and even as late as 1860 Wilson was prosecuted for heresy because in his essay on "The National Church" in *Essays and Reviews* he wrote that it was difficult to apply either

the promises or denunciations of Scripture to the mass of mankind, who were neutral in character, and could not be called either wholly good or wholly bad; and suggested that we might reasonably hope that hereafter there would be "nurseries, as it were, and seed-grounds, where the undeveloped may grow up under new conditions, the stunted may become strong, and the perverted be restored".[1]

We have moved to-day far away from this traditional view. If we want proof of this, we cannot do better, as Dr. Griffith Jones has pointed out, than note how we are content to send out to the war thousands of our young men to face death without making any serious attempt to bring them face to face with the claim of Christ before they leave our shores. Could we do this, if we honestly believed that their final destiny was unalterably determined by the choices which they had made in their brief span of earthly life?[2] Several causes have operated to bring about this change of opinion. In the first place, the conception of evolution has emphasized the thought of growth, and this we have transferred to the future life. We feel that there must be development there, as here. A static heaven has lost its meaning for us. Next, a different view of Biblical inspiration now obtains, and the letter of Scripture has no longer the

[1] *Essays and Reviews*, 12th ed. pp. 247, 248. What roused most opposition was the concluding sentence of the essay—"all, both small and great, shall find a refuge in the bosom of the Universal Parent, to repose, or be quickened into higher life, in the ages to come, according to His Will".

[2] *Faith and Immortality*, pp. 230-34.

strict authority which it had for our grandfathers. Scripture remains indeed our guide, but we look rather to its general teaching than to isolated texts. On this particular subject of final destiny the words of the New Testament are fraught with a terrible solemnity which must give pause to the most careless reader. But the disappearance of theories of verbal or plenary inspiration has freed us from the incubus of a harsh literalism in our study of the Bible, and has helped to set the problem of final destiny in a new light.

Again, deeper reflection and a widening experience have inevitably led us to question the truth of the older dogmatism. Can it be just to punish with eternal woe the choices of a few years of earthly existence? Would not such punishment be out of all proportion to the offence? It is an intolerable thought that the heathen, who have had no opportunity of learning the truth, should "perish everlastingly". An enormous number of people die in a spiritually immature condition, and thousands have had to pass their lives in circumstances which inevitably militate against the formation of moral character or religious habits. Children pass away before the power of moral decision is really developed. Are all these to be treated alike, and to be placed in the class of the hopelessly lost? Such a belief contradicts our sense of justice, and is, we feel, incompatible with the Christian doctrine that God is Love.

A cause of another kind has also operated in changing the direction of popular thought. There has unquestionably been a weakening of moral fibre in

the present generation. We probably view sin less seriously than did an earlier age, and there is a widespread tendency to think of God as a lenient Father who will not be too hard in dealing with the faults of His human children. This all reacts on our view of final destiny. We need to recover the meaning of such a phrase as "the wrath of the Lamb," and to insist that, if God is Love, He is also Holiness, and that sin is abhorrent to Him, and deserves punishment.

If, then, we are unable in this matter to accept the severer theology of an earlier age, what are we to put in its place? Can we pass to the opposite extreme and accept a belief in the final redemption of all men? Is a doctrine of Universal Restoration tenable? What grounds have we for holding that every soul of man, it may be after long periods of punishment and discipline, will climb back to God and be reconciled to Him? We should like to believe this. *Quisque suos patimur manes.* Each suffers his own ghostly discipline. We should like to think that such discipline would be so effectively remedial that ultimately the character would be completely purified and the will purged from all taint of rebellion. It is a doctrine which certainly appeals to us all.

Now in considering this doctrine we must keep clearly in mind two fundamental principles. First, no compulsion can be exercised upon the will of a moral personality without destroying his freedom and so converting him from a man into a machine. Freedom is the very heart of morality and personality. You may surround a man with a hundred influences

of grace, you may exercise suasion upon him and tempt him to righteousness, but in the last resort he remains master of his own will and must freely make his choice. If he turns away from evil to goodness it must be by his own spontaneous decision. So only does he remain a moral being. This unquestionably implies the possibility of a persistent choosing of evil. A will permanently hostile to God is a logical possibility, unless God is to take away His gift of freedom. It cannot therefore be maintained that a restoration of all men is a certainty. It may be held as a hope: it cannot be enunciated as a dogma. In the second place, God must be thought of as permanently willing the restoration of the sinner. We can set no limits to the Divine mercy in itself. Christianity has revealed God as a Being whose attitude is eternally one of love towards His creatures. If that love turns to what we in human fashion call wrath it cannot be that God ceases to love the sinner. It can only mean that the sinner has by his own impenitence brought upon himself his punishment. These two fundamental principles lie at the root of any discussion of Universalism.

Many supporters of this doctrine frankly admit that the Bible affords no sure basis for their belief. They rely rather upon general considerations for defence of their opinion, and in particular upon the character of God. Can it, they ask, be consonant with the love of God that a human soul made in the Divine image should suffer eternal ruin? Can we further believe that the Divine purpose, which includes the salvation of all men, should fail, as it must fail if some souls

persist in refusing the offer of grace? May we not reasonably believe that in the clearer light of the other world even the most hardened sinner will see the error of his ways, and yield to the pressure of the Divine love? But then comes in the other side of the antithesis, human freedom and all which it involves of the possibility of persistent refusal to embrace goodness. I can see no solution of this difficulty.

If we are to appreciate the problem aright three considerations must be borne in mind. First, is it true to say that the Divine purpose must fail if some souls remain unrepentant? What is meant by such a phrase as "that God may be all in all"? (1 Cor. xv. 28). If evil is finally subdued and rendered impotent, is not the Divine victory completely achieved? Evil wills may still exist outside the kingdom of righteousness, but if they are powerless to interfere with the life of that kingdom is not God's triumph complete? His triumph is not complete at present, for evil here thwarts the operation of goodness, but if all such thwarting is rendered impossible, as we believe it will be in the final consummation, can we not truly say that the sovereignty of God is vindicated? Secondly, we have to ask whether the Universalist is necessarily right in assuming that the moral conditions of life beyond the grave will render repentance easier. His argument is that the soul which has here continued to defy God will there be unable to do so, because the hardest heart will melt when it realizes clearly the tenderness of the Divine love. What evidence is there for this? It may be so, but we have no right

to assume it. Thirdly, can there be such a thing as fixity of character final and complete? Those who believe in the possibility of the eternal ruin of a soul usually argue that persistence in evil choices, if continued long enough, results in a settled character of evil, a habit of soul from which there is no escape. But must not a personality always have alternatives before it, and be free to exercise its choice between them? Is not personality always "in the making" and never a completely finished product? If so, then even in hell there will be a possibility of reformation. Here, however, we plunge into speculations which lie beyond our present powers of comprehension, and all dogmatizing is out of place.

The passages in the Bible upon which the Universalist chiefly relies hardly seem to bear out his contention. What we find in Scripture is this—on the one hand teaching, with which Christ's own words accord, which speaks of the possibility of utter exclusion from the Kingdom, of irremediable loss and ruin, of an undying worm and unquenchable fire; on the other hand, a group of passages, most of them in St. Paul's Epistles, which speak of the final triumph of Christ and goodness. The most important of these passages are the following: "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22). "For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. . . . And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 25-28). "To sum up all things in Christ"

(Eph. i. 10). God "willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 4). "That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 10, 11). "And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of the Cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens" (Col. i. 20).

It is unnecessary here to examine these passages in detail.[1] But in studying them we must ask ourselves whether St. Paul is speaking of the Divine purpose and intention, or whether he is contemplating the universal co-operation of men with the Divine purpose. There can, I think, be no question that he has the former in mind. The Divine purpose is entirely gracious, and is universal in its scope. But men need not co-operate with it. Its fulfilment may be temporarily hindered by human refusal, though it cannot be finally thwarted. Its final consummation, however, need not carry with it the reconciliation of all men with God. As we have already seen evil may still exist in a state of impotence. The perfect kingdom will have come; Christ will take His power and reign as absolute victor; but outside the kingdom may be those who by their own act have excluded themselves from it. If, on the other hand, our exegesis of these passages leads us to adopt a more optimistic view of

[1] Salmond discusses them fully in *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, Bk. vi.

their meaning, then we find ourselves confronted with a double strain of teaching in Scripture. We find, as Martensen maintains, an antinomy in the Bible on this matter which we cannot resolve; for the antinomy repeats itself in the processes of our reasoning. Reconciliation and restoration would seem to be the natural outcome of an eternal purpose of love. The possibility of a persistent evil choice hereafter as well as here would seem to be necessarily involved in the possession of freedom.

What, in conclusion, are we to say about the use of the word "eternal" in this connexion in the New Testament? The universalist as a rule supports the contention of F. D. Maurice that αἰώνιος is not a quantitative but a qualitative term, and that it does not mean endless or everlasting, but refers to a timeless spiritual condition. He would say therefore that such a statement as that of our Lord in Matthew xxv. 46, "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life," does not imply the idea of unending woe. Let us note, first of all, that the same word "æonian" is used both of the fate of the good and of the fate of the wicked. Whatever it means in the one case it must mean in the other. But what does it mean? In John vi. 54 the words occur, "he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life," and in v. 58 we read, "he that eateth this bread shall live for ever". Eternal life here certainly carries with it the idea of endlessness. Salmond, I think, is right in his contention that "æonian" everywhere stands in opposition to the temporal or transitory, and suggests what

is permanent and unchanging, and that the root idea of the term is that of duration. In the Fourth Gospel the ethical or qualitative aspect of the word is emphasized. St. John has in mind primarily a kind of life which he calls eternal. But "the adjective takes its heightened sense from the object to which it is attached. It is the 'life' that gives its profound ethical sense to the 'eternal'; it is not the adjective that raises the 'life' to that power."[1] The permanence of eternal life we shall all be ready to admit; time can lay no destructive finger on one who shares the life of Christ. It is the permanence of woe or punishment against which we naturally revolt. But if we are arguing from the meaning of special terms we must in fairness make "æonian" punishment signify the same as "æonian" life.

We merely involve ourselves in difficulties, however, if we seek to construe eternity in terms of unending time. Living as we do in time we naturally tend to picture eternity as an everlasting succession. But an infinite regress or an infinite progress has really no meaning for thought, and it certainly cannot satisfy our religious aspirations. For religion eternity connotes qualitative value, and in particular the permanence of the moral character and purposes of God as affording a sure ground of hope and confidence to the human soul in its passage through time.[2] Nor is the true significance of time itself to be found in the

[1] Salmond, *op. cit.* p. 519.

[2] Cp. Pringle-Pattison's *The Idea of God*, pp. 348-9. Lecture xviii. of this volume gives an admirable analysis of the meaning of time and eternity.

thought of the succession of disconnected moments, but rather, as Bergson has pointed out, in "duration" or the continuous flow of experience, in which successive moments melt into each other. Past, present, and future thus form one continuous whole, the present being the meeting-point of the past and the future, the point at which, as Bergson puts it, the past "gnaws into the future".[1] This view of time throws some light upon the nature of eternity. If succession is not the essential element in time, but that is rather to be found in the conception of an organic whole of flowing parts, of a continuous experience moving towards an end, will not eternity imply the fuller realization of this unity? The self in eternity will know itself and its purposes as it cannot know them here. It will know, too, far more clearly the purposes of God and its own essential relation to God as the fount of all its life, and it will understand more fully its relation to other souls. Eternity implies the existence of a clearer vision of the unity of all being and of the living interconnexions of the parts with the whole. The kingdom of heaven is a state of mutual service and realized fellowship. May not "eternal punishment" be the reverse of this, a state in which the soul knows its own isolation and want of harmony with the whole?[2] And may it not be that, unless each soul is finally to be reconciled to God, the fate of the wicked will be extinction, the

[1] *Creative Evolution*, p. 5.

[2] Cp. Von Hügel's article "What do we mean by Heaven? And what do we mean by Hell?" in *The Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1917.

progressive disintegration of the personality as it finds itself unable to co-operate with the great purposes of God?

We are thus led on to consider the rival theory of Conditional Immortality, the essence of which is that immortality is not the natural birthright of all men, but something which has to be won in life's struggle, a special gift from God which can be received only if certain conditions are fulfilled. Those who do not fulfil the conditinos do not receive the gift, and sooner or later they are put out of existence. Conditional immortality has never been what we may call a popular doctrine. It does not satisfy the instincts and convictions of the human heart which demand immortality for all men. It has won a place for itself in our speculations about the future probably for three main reasons. In the first place, it gets rid of the difficulty of eternal punishment by assuming that the wicked ultimately cease to be. Next, it cuts the knot of the problem connected with the existence of seemingly useless lives, the congenital idiot or the child which dies at birth, by maintaining that such lives have not reached the level of survival-value and so naturally perish. Thirdly, it seems, on a hasty survey of the matter, to fall into line with the doctrine of evolution, which pictures life as a struggle in which the ill-adapted go to the wall and fail to maintain themselves.

The doctrine, however, except in one special form of it, which we shall examine later, commends itself neither to the heart nor the reason, and there are grave objections to it as it is commonly presented by its sup-

porters. Before we state what these objections are let us briefly consider the three reasons given above for the existence of the doctrine.

(*a*) To assume that the wicked perish at death does not satisfy the deep-rooted ethical demand for justice and punishment which is almost universal in the human race. Is the Conditionalist in any better case if he argues that his system allows for punishment, since he does not hold that the sinner has no future life, but expressly maintains that he survives death for a terminable period, during which he undergoes the penalty for his misdeeds? Is not this a revolting theory? It involves a view of punishment which we surely cannot hold. There is a retributive element in punishment, though modern theories of punishment tend to leave it out of account. Punishment expresses our sense that some homage is due to a violated moral order. The majesty of this order must be vindicated. The offender must be made to feel that he has outraged the eternal principles of right. But no punishment can be regarded as merely retributive. The essence of it is that it shall be remedial and corrective. We punish because we hope thereby to reform the wrong-doer and to bring him to a better mind. According, however, to the theory of conditional immortality the sinner has no chance of being reformed, for after he has suffered his punishment he goes out of existence. He is allowed to survive temporarily merely that vengeance may be taken on him. Let us suppose that the retribution begins to have its reforming effect, that the sinner is truly penitent and seeks to amend his ways. His

penitence is useless. His doom is sure. Can we believe that Divine love can be thus purely vindictive, or that God, to whom all personality is sacred, could destroy a soul at the very moment when it was seeking to co-operate with His moral purposes?

(*b*) The difficulty about seemingly useless lives is met, if we admit the principle of growth in the future life. The child who dies at birth has in him the capacity for development, and we may reasonably assume that hereafter he will have opportunity for growth. Similarly with the congenital idiot. His spiritual progress is checked here by the operation of unfavourable physical conditions. Remove those conditions, free him from the hampering effects of a diseased brain, and you may see him develop as a normal personality.

(*c*) The attempt to buttress the doctrine of conditional immortality by appeals to evolutionary theories calls for careful criticism. In the struggle for existence those forms survive which have succeeded in adapting themselves to their surroundings. The theory of natural selection rests on a basis of three facts; the fact of variability in organisms, the fact of inheritance, by which there is a more or less accurate reproduction in offspring of parental characteristics, and the fact of a tendency in organisms to multiply so rapidly that they outrun the limits of the food supply.

From these facts results a struggle for existence, in which those organisms whose variations enable them to adapt themselves to their environment will have the best chance of survival. Darwin's own words are: "This preservation of favourable individual

differences and variations, and the destruction of those which are injurious, I have called Natural Selection, or the Survival of the Fittest".[1] It must be noted that the fittest are not necessarily the strongest. "The nature of the environment determines whether a variation shall be reckoned favourable or not. Strength is not necessarily the criterion of advantage. Sometimes a keener scent may preserve a form, or a greater swiftness or cunning, or the power to resist sudden changes of temperature, or the adoption of nocturnal habits, or protective colouring."[2] Evolution does not necessarily imply progress. It may often be of advantage to a species to become degenerate and drop out of the main line of advance, if thereby it can the better adapt itself to its surroundings. Parasites, for example, are very frequently degenerate forms. They survive because they have left the main stream of life and have anchored themselves in some quiet backwater.

Now it is easy to apply biological language to the religious development of man and to speak here of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. But we must be on our guard that we do not overlook factors which, if they are taken into account, materially alter the circumstances of the case. Can we, for example, say that the wicked who, on the conditionalist hypothesis, are put out of existence are the unfit who perish in the struggle for life? In a general way we can, if we like to say that it is the

[1] *Origin of Species*, p. 58.

[2] Quoted from p. 43 of the author's *Development and Divine Purpose.*

duty of man to adapt himself to his spiritual environment.

There must be a correspondence between the organism and its surroundings if it is to survive. Similarly there must be a correspondence between man and God, whom we may describe as man's spiritual environment. But there is all the difference in the world between the two struggles. Natural selection, as it operates among plants and animals, is a self-acting, mechanical process. We cannot think of the lower organisms as consciously seeking to adapt themselves to their surroundings, or with set purpose striving to create favourable variations. Unquestionably there is an element of conation operative. Living organisms are not automata, and are impelled by impulses and instincts and a general desire for self-preservation. But this conation is largely unconscious of the ends which it seeks. It stands at a level altogether lower than the deliberate conscious endeavour of a personality. Where you are dealing with human agents possessed of freedom and consciously seeking to realize ideals you cannot apply the purely biological categories of evolutionary science. In the course of the evolutionary process new kinds emerge, and each new kind must be interpreted by the principles appropriate to it. Spiritual categories are needed for the interpretation of personality. The higher can never be adequately explained by the lower. With regard to the particular point before us we have to bear in mind the following considerations. First, if we are to call the good who survive the fit, and the wicked who perish the unfit, we must re-

member that our standard of fitness has nothing whatever in common with the fitness of which the biologist speaks. Fitness or unfitness here is a matter of character, and character in its turn is the product of moral choices. By his free decisions each man has made his own heaven or hell for himself. Again, we may choose to speak of the wicked as perishing because they have failed to adapt themselves to their spiritual environment which is God. But the relationship which exists between man and God is very different from the relationship between an organism and its surroundings. In the one case you have the communion of personal fellowship and the free interchange of life; in the other a mere series of adjustments accidentally brought about.[1]

Lastly, and most important of all, we apply to personality a standard of worth which we apply to nothing else; a person has for us a spiritual value which is unique. And it is because personality in itself has this value that we claim immortality as the natural birthright of every human being.

There are the following further objections to the theory of conditional immortality.

1. It runs counter to the doctrine of the solidarity of humanity. It divides men into two classes, those who are immortal and those who are not. This, as Salmond points out, is not merely a matter of distinction in character, but of an essential difference in make

[1] Accidentally, that is, according to the theory of natural selection. A deeper view of the relation between organism and environment would refuse to treat the two factors as standing in an external relation to each other.

or constitution. Those who are qualified to receive from God the gift of immortality acquire something which changes the fundamental structure of their being. They enter into an altogether different order of life. But can we thus sever mankind into two sections? Is not humanity one whole, spiritually as well as physically? Are we not all fundamentally of the same constitution?

2. The Bible certainly teaches that we are. And, in addition, the Bible emphasizes the vital difference which exists between human beings and the beasts which perish. The doctrine of Scripture is that man is made in the image of God, shares the Divine nature, and is heir to an immortal destiny because of his kinship to God. The Conditionalist theory robs a large section of humanity of its spiritual privileges and reduces it to the level of the animal creation. You do not preserve the dignity of man by allowing him to survive death for a limited period only. A true immortality is what he demands. And, as has been pertinently asked, if he can survive the shock of death can he not survive all other vicissitudes?

3. The Conditionalist, like the Universalist, assumes that the evil will hereafter gradually loses its power and exhausts itself. The latter argues that the most hardened sinner will ultimately yield to the appeal of the Divine love. The former maintains that a sinful personality will be unable to maintain itself in existence, and will perish because it lacks the principle of true life. We have already seen how questionable is this assumption. Our earthly experience shows that the more evil desires are indulged

the stronger they grow. The personality of a bad man is as vigorous and living as the personality of a good man. We see no tendency here for evil to wear itself out. Why should we assume that such a tendency will operate hereafter? It may be that God by an act of Divine power will finally destroy the wicked who remain unrepentant. But that is not the same thing as saying that there is a natural tendency in evil to grow weaker until it can no longer maintain itself.

The New Testament, it is certainly true to say, teaches that man is essentially an immortal being. Our Lord everywhere emphasizes the high worth and dignity of the individual, and by taking our human nature reveals it as being capable of union with Godhead. Christianity sets forth man, not only as a co-operator with the Divine purposes, but as a sharer of the Divine life, as a being who has an essential kinship with God. For such a being immortality is the natural destiny. It is just because man is a creature of such worth that life's moral and spiritual choices are of so grave import. Nothing can exceed the gravity of Christ's words about sin and its results. He speaks of the possibility of final ruin, exclusion from the kingdom, of being guilty of an eternal sin. He uses language which certainly implies that our future weal or woe depends upon the use which we make of our present opportunities here below, and He nowhere gives any hint of further chances of repentance and amendment after death. Many will say that this settles the matter, that no mitigation of this severe teaching is possible, and that we are

wrong to seek for it. But faith and reason must go hand in hand. The authority of Christ is not the authority of the bare *ipse dixit.* Every age must interpret the Christian revelation so as to effect, if possible, an adjustment between its teaching and its own outlook. New problems are always arising which were not present to the mind of an earlier generation, and it often happens that the answer which satisfied our grandfathers will not satisfy their grandchildren. We are, then, only doing what respect for truth and reality requires us to do, when we seek to restate the problem of final destiny.

(*a*) Now, if the New Testament is dogmatic about the fate of the wicked, it preserves a complete silence as to the fate of those who cannot fairly be called wicked, but belong to the large class of the neutral or undecided. I would emphasize this word "undecided," for it contains the kernel of the problem. Thousands die who have never had the opportunity to make the decision whether they will give their allegiance to Christ or not. Christ offers life to all men, but we must be in a position to understand what the offer really means before we can be said to accept or reject it. I am not speaking of the heathen who die in complete ignorance of Christ, but of those who, though they have often heard of Christ, and have some general understanding of His claim, have for various reasons never been confronted with the real gravity of the issue. It has never come home to them personally. The deeps of their souls have never been stirred. Their wills have never been moved to a real decision reached after deliberation. "I had

heard of thee by the hearing of the ear." So long as Job was in that condition he had not understood God or come into vital relation with Him. "But now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (xlii. 5, 6). When he had come face to face with God the whole current of his life was changed. He knew both himself and God. He had penetrated to the profound region where the Divine and the human meet, and a new spiritual illumination came to him. Our native sense of justice tells us that it is unreasonable, and indeed immoral, to mete out the same treatment to a soul spiritually undeveloped, which has never faced Christ's offer of life with full personal understanding of it, and to one which like Milton's Satan has deliberately said "evil be thou my good". We may surely believe that for the spiritually immature and those who die with characters unformed some further opportunity for probation will be provided.[1]

(*b*) But what of the wicked, those who have clearly understood Christ's offer of redemption, and have deliberately rejected it? Can we believe that for the sins of a lifetime they are to suffer an eternity of woe? As I have already said we cannot form any clear conception of what eternity means. But if we take it in its popular significance as meaning unendingness, then we instinctively revolt against the dogma of eternal punishment, which we cannot but regard as being incompatible with the love of God. We are entirely in the dark here, and speculation is really

[1] This is the line strongly taken by Griffith-Jones in *Faith and Immortality*.

useless. But it would seem more consonant with our belief in the Divine Fatherhood to hold that God in His mercy will finally put out of being the souls of the irremediably wicked, if indeed a soul can ever be beyond hope of restoration. If God creates a soul He can destroy it—"fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. x. 28).

(*c*) Many of the gravest of Christ's words upon final destiny belong to the class of apocalyptic utterances. They are couched in the popular eschatological language of the day, and are Oriental in colour and imagery. The interpretation which we put upon them will in part depend upon the general view we take of the apocalyptic element in His teaching. It may be that some relief to the situation will be found in referring these utterances to the advent of the Messianic kingdom, and not to the question of final destiny. But we must remember that what our Lord says about final destiny is not limited to the apocalyptic sections. His references to the final issues of life are very numerous and very varied ; and when we have said all which may be said by way of mitigating the severity of the teaching, we are still confronted with the fact that He speaks as if this life's decisions determined irrevocably our future condition.

(*d*) This life and the next : earth and heaven or hell. But when is our *final* destiny reached? "In my Father's house are many mansions"—*μοναὶ πολλαί*. The Greek word suggests a resting-place for travellers on the road. "The contrasted notions of repose and progress are combined in this vision of

the future."[1] In a word, growth is everywhere the law of life, and since there is to be growth hereafter we may perhaps feel that growth will be possible in the next life for every soul, and that no fixity of character or rigid set of the will can be reached in the threescore years and ten of earthly existence. Prophecy foreshortened the future. Christ in His apocalyptic utterances did the same. May it not be that when the Bible speaks of final destiny it overlooks the intermediate stages before the finality is achieved? Our real difficulty here is, that we cannot tell when the tendencies of character become fixed. There are men who seem so steeped in wickedness, who have so often rejected the Divine offer of grace, that you would say that they are beyond repentance. Yet can personality ever be regarded as a fixed quantity? Are there not always in a personality possibilities of amendment? Are there not always before it moral alternatives? Can freedom of choice ever be completely lost? We cannot tell. But we know that habits of soul quickly form, that will-power may easily be so weakened that recovery becomes very difficult. He would be a foolish man who persisted in evil on the chance that some day he might arouse himself and snap the chains which bind him.

We must deal briefly with the two passages in the First Epistle of St. Peter, difficult and obscure though they are, because immense emphasis has been laid upon them by the supporters of Universalism

[1] Cp. the note on this passage in Westcott's commentary on St. John's Gospel.

and all who hold that further opportunities for probation and repentance will be given in the next life.

(*a*) The first passage is in 1 Peter iii. 18-20, and runs as follows: "Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water".

Of this passage two main lines of interpretation are current. We will begin with the one which has the least weight of opinion in its favour. This denies that the passage teaches that Christ in the interval between His death and resurrection went to Hades and there preached to the spirits in prison.

It maintains that the scene of Christ's preaching was earth, not Hades; and that the time was the days of Noah, and not the interval between Christ's death and resurrection. The preacher was Christ in His pre-incarnate existence, and He preached through the Divine warnings given to the men of Noah's generation, of which the building of the ark was the chief. If this is the true meaning of the passage then all the elaborate theological speculations, based on a supposed ministry of Christ to the dead, fall to the ground. The general argument of the passage will then be this: "If you have to suffer for well-doing bear it patiently. Your sufferings will bring their reward. Christ suffered for the unjust, and though He died,

yet His spirit received new life and power. And the graciousness of Christ which led Him to suffer for others was shown even before He became incarnate; for He went and preached to the sinners in the days of Noah making known to them His purpose of salvation by the warnings which He gave them, of which the building of the ark was the chief. Christ has still the same loving purpose to save, which baptism figures to us."

Salmond[1] points out the merits of this interpretation, which he himself accepts. It starts with what is clearest in the passage, the reference to Noah, and not with what is most obscure, the reference to the spirits in prison. It falls into line with St. Peter's reference (1, ii.) to the work of the pre-incarnate Christ who spoke through the prophets. And it harmonizes with the main thought of the passage, the exhortation to patient bearing of undeserved suffering. Christ is an example to these suffering disciples, for He showed His graciousness even in the case of the wicked generation of the Flood.

The other interpretation makes the passage teach a ministry of Christ between His death and resurrection to the dwellers in the world of departed spirits. Our Lord, says St. Peter, was "quickened in the spirit". After His death He still lived and ministered; He went to preach to spirits in prison, who, we are told, had been disobedient in the days of Noah. Did He preach a message of judgment or of hope? It is clear that it was a message of hope. The words must be taken in connexion with

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 378.

what follows in iv. 6, where the preaching of the gospel to the dead had plainly a gracious purpose.[1] The main thought in St. Peter's mind is that without repentance salvation is impossible; but in order that men may have a fair chance of repentance opportunity for hearing the gospel must be given them. And who are "the spirits in prison"? The context implies that they were the spirits of those who refused to listen in Noah's day. Bigg has the following note which I quote in full, because it leads up to a third interpretation of the passage which is mentioned later: "It is probable that St. Peter is here expressing in a modified form a belief which was current in the Jewish schools. In the *Book of Enoch* (ed. Charles, chaps. lx. 5, 25, lxiv., lxix. 26) will be found obscure and mutilated passages which may be taken to mean that the antedeluvian sinners, the giants, and the men whom they have deluded, have a time of repentance allowed them between the first judgment (the Deluge) and the final judgment at the end of the world. In the last passage referred to we read that there was great joy among them 'because the name of the Son of Man was revealed unto them'. Weber (quoted by Kühl) cites two passages from the *Bereschit Rabba:* 'But when they that are bound, they that are in Gehinnom, saw the light of the Messiah, they rejoiced to receive Him'; and again: 'This is that which stands written: We shall rejoice and exult in Thee. When? When the captives climb up out of

[1] Cp. Bigg's note in *St. Peter and St. Jude* in "International Critical Commentary" series.

hell and the Shechinah at their head.' . . . St. Peter limits this Jewish doctrine to the special case of those who have not heard the gospel on earth. It will be observed also that he alludes to Jewish tradition without expressly quoting it."

The exegetical difficulties of the passage are so great that it throws very little light on the problem before us. It certainly affords no ground to the Universalist for his belief that all men will finally be reconciled to God. For in the first place the preaching was limited to those who were disobedient in Noah's day; and in the second place we are not told whether the preaching resulted in the repentance of those who heard it. What we may gather from the passage is that St. Peter felt, that in order that there might be repentance there must be an opportunity given for hearing the gospel. This falls in with our natural conviction that judgment will be according to opportunity, and that a further period of probation awaits those who, from whatever reason, have not fairly come face to face with the truth in their earthly life.

A third interpretation of the passage deserves mention. This makes the preacher to the spirits in prison not Christ, but Enoch. Some modification of the text is needed if this view is to be adopted. The suggestion that Enoch was the preacher is an old one, but some sixteen years ago both Dr. Rendel Harris and Dr. M. R. James made it afresh, in independence of each other and of the earlier proposals. The former has written in the *Expositor* in defence of his theory, and what follows is taken from

his articles.[1] Three points have to be considered. What traces are there of any influence of the *Book of Enoch* upon St. Peter's Epistle? What alteration is required in the text? Is there anything in the *Book of Enoch* which supports the hypothesis that Enoch undertook a mission of preaching in Hades?

Dr. Rendel Harris has tried to prove an influence of *Enoch* on the Epistle in connexion with the passage in 1 Peter i. 10-12, where we read that the prophets prophesied of a grace which was to come to the Gentiles, and received a revelation "that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things".

With this he compares 1 Enoch i. 2: "Enoch, a righteous man, whose eyes were opened by God, saw the vision of the Holy One in the heavens, which the angels showed me, and from them I heard everything, and from them I understood as I saw, but not for this generation, but for a remote one which is for to come".

We have, he maintains, a double parallel—(1) *οὐκ εἰς τὴν νῦν γενεάν* = *οὐχ ἑαυτοῖς*, (2) *ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πόρρω οὖσαν* = *ὑμῖν δε διηκόνουν αὐτά*. And the parallel is

[1] The suggestion seems to have been made first by Bowyer who in 1763 published a Greek Testament based on Wetstein's readings but with conjectural emendations of his own, cp. an article by George Farmer, "Did our Lord or Enoch preach to the Spirits in Prison?" in *Expositor*, vol. vi. pp. 377-8. It passed, as Rendel Harris notes, into Griesbach's New Testament, cp. "The History of a Conjectural Emendation," *Expositor*, vol. vi. pp. 377-90. It was also made by Cramer, a Dutch theologian, in 1891, cp. *Expositor*, vol. v. pp. 317-20, "On a Recent Emendation in the Text of St. Peter," by Rendel Harris.

made more complete if for St. Peter's διηκόνουν (ministered) we read διενοοῦντο (contemplated), for in Enoch we find διενοούμην.[1]

I must leave to scholars to decide whether Dr. Rendel Harris has made good his case. That there is a strong influence of *Enoch* on the *Epistle of St. Jude* is clear, and it is the opinion of Canon Charles that "the influence of 1 Enoch on the New Testament has been greater than that of all the other apocryphal and pseudepigraphical books put together".[2] It may well be that St. Peter was influenced by the book in this passage. If he was there is all the more reason for supposing that the passage about the spirits in prison looks back to *Enoch.*

With regard to the emendation of the text Cramer's suggestion is that Ἐνώχ should be read for ἐν ᾧ καὶ ("*in which also* he went and preached unto the spirits in prison"). To this Dr. Rendel Harris objects on the ground that the connecting formula ἐν ᾧ is characteristic of St. Peter's style and should therefore be preserved.[3] He himself prefers the hypothesis that Ἐνώχ has dropped out, as it very easily may have done.

[1] Cp. "An Unobserved Quotation from the Book of Enoch," *Expositor*, vol. iv. pp. 194-99 (Sep. 1891).

[2] Quoted from p. xxvii of the Introduction to *The Book of Enoch*, by R. H. Charles in S.P.C.K.'s "Translations of Early Documents". Canon Charles tells me, however, that he is not inclined to give much support to the suggestion that Enoch was the preacher to the spirits.

[3] *Expositor*, vol. iv. pp. 346-9, "A Further Note on the Use of Enoch in 1 Peter". For other examples of the use of the formula, cp. i. 6; ii. 12; iv. 4.

ΕνωκαιΕνωχτοιςενφυλακη.

"Write the opening words of the sentence" thus "and observe how easily the name of Enoch would drop out in copying. It is the simplest kind of error to drop repeated letters in this way."[1]

Is there anything in the Book of Enoch which points to a mission undertaken by Enoch to the spirits in prison? Who were these spirits? Dr. Bigg in the note quoted above refers to "obscure and mutilated passages (i.e. in Enoch) which may be taken to mean that the antedeluvian sinners . . . have a time of repentance allowed them". Dr. Rendel Harris would make the reference more precise. He writes: "It is commonly recognized that these imprisoned spirits are the angels who sinned with mortal women, for whose offence and its punishment the Book of Enoch is our prime authority. The very language used in Enoch for their place of punishment—'This place is the prison of the angels' (Enoch xxi. 10)—is in close correspondence with the Petrine expression."[2] Salmond, however, denies that St. Peter's words can refer to the fallen angels, or giants. "The description of the sin of the 'spirits in prison' as *disobedience*, and the idea of the *preaching* (which as here expressed can only be a preaching of *grace*), are obviously inappropriate to these instances."[3]

The passage in Enoch to which Dr. Harris refers is xii. 4: "Enoch, thou scribe of righteousness, go, declare to the Watchers of the heaven who have left

[1] *Expositor*, vol. iv. p. 348.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 346, 347. The statement about the sin of the angels is in Genesis vi. 1-4.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 379.

the high heaven, the holy eternal place, and have defiled themselves with women. . . . 'Ye have wrought great destruction on the earth: And ye shall have no peace nor forgiveness of sin.'" Here certainly there is no ministry of grace, but only a message of judgment.

(*b*) The second passage in St. Peter is iv. 6: "For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit". It is equally difficult to explain these words. The Apostle is urging his Christian hearers to have done entirely with the sins of the heathen. If the latter revile or slander them for their loyalty to Christ let them remain steadfast, knowing that a judgment is at hand in which all will receive the just recompense for their deeds whether good or bad. There follow the words in verse 6, the connexion of which with what has gone before is not clear. The argument may be that it is only reasonable that the dead should be judged, because they too will have the gospel preached to them hereafter; or the words may be regarded as an encouragement to the Christians to live righteously, since judgment is certain for both dead and living alike.

The dead cannot mean the spiritually dead, as some have maintained. It must refer to those whose earthly course is over. Are all the dead included, or only some? Both views are possible, and commentators do not agree on the matter. The time of the preaching is definitely described as past—"the gospel was preached". Can we interpret this as meaning

that the gospel will continue to be preached to those who are yet to die without having heard it; or is the Apostle referring to some finished act of preaching in the past? Here again there are differences of opinion. These are but specimens of the problems raised by the passage. Our interpretation of it must to some extent be determined by our view of the former passage. Both seem to belong to the same general cycle of ideas. Those who find in the former a statement of a ministry of grace in the other life will naturally see a confirmation of such a statement in this passage, and a statement which goes beyond the scope of the earlier one, since the preaching is not here limited to the antedeluvians.

It has, perhaps, been worth while to treat of these passages in some detail, if only to show how impossible it is to dogmatize on the strength of them. Future scholarship may be able to throw more light on the difficulties; there may yet be discoveries in Jewish literature which will provide a clue. Meanwhile we must remain content with being in ignorance about much which we should like to know in the matter of final destiny. A reverent agnosticism is a temper of mind which has its advantages. It promotes humility, and leads us back to first principles, to the great and abiding truths of which we may be certain. And these surely are great enough to provide a solid foundation for our lives. Excessive speculation upon the things which are hidden from us is an unhealthy occupation. The wise man recognizes his limitations, and finds in them the best opportunity for the strengthening of character.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LIFE HEREAFTER.

We need to emphasize the splendour and fullness of the Christian hope of immortality. It is no mere question of survival only. Many would not care to survive if the future life were to be nothing better than this life. What the Christian looks forward to is a life altogether higher in quality and richer in its activities and relationships. Heaven has no meaning unless it implies a contrast with earth. Can we form any conception of what the life hereafter will be? I think we can. Imagination may be unable to construct a picture of it, but thought, following out the hints and suggestions afforded by our life here on earth, can grasp some of its characteristics. If there is continuity between the two lives the one must contain some prophecy or adumbration of the other. In this concluding chapter therefore I shall attempt to sketch some features of the life beyond the grave, and to show how magnificent is the Christian hope.

1. The future life will be a life richer in quality and context than our life here. This richness will manifest itself in various directions. In the first place, since our existence will be an embodied existence, Christianity knowing nothing of disembodied spirits, we may reasonably expect that our spiritual control

of matter will be more complete. It has been pointed out that the higher types of religion have usually assumed that the relationship between the visible and invisible worlds is spiritual and ethical alone.[1] But science has made it plain that the world of sensible experience, the world which we touch and see and taste, is but a fragment of a much wider world, whose confines we are able to explore by the aid of various instruments. If our senses were differently constructed, or more delicate, our relationships with this wider material universe would be increased. May we not look forward to such an enrichment of our relationships with matter in the life to come? Spirit, as we have seen, uses matter as its instrument here. Will not spirit's control of matter hereafter be more complete? Religion tends to make the relation between the visible and invisible worlds moral and religious only, because what she means by the invisible world is the world of non-phenomenal being, the eternal world of realized spiritual ideals. But if we are to live on as persons in the hereafter our life must have relationships with matter. We cannot therefore in our forecast of immortality leave out of account this fact. And surely it is a very real part of the Christian hope, and one fraught with religious significance, that our relationships with matter will hereafter be richer. Nature here reveals the glory of God. The argument from beauty and the argument from design both lead up to God. The renovation of nature is part of the hope both of the prophets and of St. Paul; and to match a renovated nature there will be, we hope,

[1] By Mellone in *The Immortal Hope*, p. 74.

on the part of man a quickened sense of beauty and its spiritual significance, and an increased control of the energies of matter. Spiritualism, whether we adjudge its claim to be true or not, forcibly reminds us that the visible world is continuous with a wider invisible world, and "in the depths of our being and at every level of our inner life, there are traces of faculties which connect us with a wider realm than that of the visible world".[1] Must not growth hereafter involve a development of these faculties?

> All tended to mankind,
> And, man produced, all has its end thus far:
> But in completed man begins anew
> A tendency to God. Prognostics told
> Man's near approach; so in man's self arise
> August anticipations, symbols, types,
> Of a dim splendour ever on before
> In that eternal circle run by life.[2]

2. We may look for an enrichment of our social life hereafter. The life of heaven is a life of love and fellowship and service. We may hope for the abolition of some of the barriers which here divide us from each other. Personal life will continue in its distinctiveness, but a clearer vision of the whole to which we belong and the growth of wider sympathies will help to break down our individualism. We shall realize more fully what membership in the kingdom means. If further chances of repentance are allowed us it may be that the operative cause of amendment will be found in the heightened sense of our essential oneness.

[1] Mellone, *op. cit.* p. 89. [2] Browning, *Paracelsus*.

Sin is selfishness, an offence against the society of which we are members. An increased realization of our membership in one body and of the injury done to the life of the body by individual self-will may be a potent instrument in effecting our reformation. Is it a merely fanciful thought to suggest that, if by our sinning we have done injury to another, we may be able to make some amends by increased devotion to the good of the whole? The life of the whole flows through all its members. If at any one point it is quickened will not the effect of such quickening be felt throughout the whole? And may not my service for the whole bring some help and healing to the soul I injured in the past?

Some are troubled by the doubt whether we shall recognize our friends hereafter. Surely such a doubt is groundless. The survival of personality must carry with it recognition of those we loved and knew on earth. Our existence in the future will, as we have seen, be an embodied existence, and the body is our means of communication with each other. Love, the vital energy of the heavenly life, would cease to be love if there were no recognition of loved ones. The New Testament assumes the fact of recognition. St. Paul bids the Thessalonians sorrow not "concerning them that fall asleep . . . for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1, iv. 13, 14). They will meet their friends again. Dives recognized Lazarus. Moses and Elijah appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration.

That each, who seems a separate whole,
Should move his rounds, and fusing all
The skirts of self again, should fall
Remerging in the general Soul.

Is faith as vague as all unsweet;
Eternal form shall still divide
The eternal soul from all beside;
And I shall know him when we meet.

3. To see anything *sub specie aeternitatis* is to see it in its manifold relationships with the whole. Hereafter the range of our knowledge will be increased and our vision of truth will be clearer. "In thy light shall we see light." In the light of the knowledge of God all lesser truths will receive fresh illumination. Each truth will fall into its proper place as a member of the organic system of truth. Here we know only "in part". Hereafter we may hope for a knowledge which, if it is still "in part," will be increasingly progressive, and at every stage will be instinct with the sense of the whole. Mozley has pointed out how "Scripture has specially consecrated the faculty of sight, and has partly put forth, and has promised in a still more complete form, a manifestation of the Deity to mankind, through the medium of a great sight".[1] The *Visio Dei* crowns the Christian's hope of the future. "It is a sight, a picture, a representation, that constitutes the heavenly state, not mere thought and contemplation. The glorified saint of Scripture is especially a beholder; he gazes, he looks; he fixes his eyes upon something before him; he does not merely ruminate within, but his whole mind is

[1] Sermon on "Nature" in *University Sermons*, p. 136.

carried out towards and upon a great representation. And thus heaven specially appears in Scripture as the sphere of perfected sight; when the faculty is raised and exalted to its highest act, and the happiness of existence culminates in vision."[1]

Of the reality symbolized by the pictorial representations of the Bible and by the *Visio Dei* we can have no adequate experience here. But the emphasis laid upon the faculty of sight suggests the following reflections. Our apprehension of truth will be more immediate. The intuition of the prophet in the Old Testament frequently shaped itself in the form of vision; and vision suggests the directness and immediacy of intuition. Truth will become more luminous to us. It will take possession of us, and we of it, with an immediacy which will outstrip the slower processes of the reasoning faculty. Again, vision suggests harmony and satisfaction. Beauty is an end in itself. We rest satisfied with the beauty of a sunset or a noble work of art. In the contemplation of beauty our whole being is for the moment absorbed: beauty makes its appeal to our complete self. The thought of the *Visio Dei* holds out the promise of a satisfaction of our whole personality, which expresses itself in worship and praise. There in God we shall find the goal of all our striving, the perfecting of that fellowship with Him which is the essence of religion. It will be no state of idle repose, but a progressive communion with the Source of all goodness and truth and life, which, while it points onward to increasing growth, yields at each moment a satisfaction of which

[1] Sermon on "Nature" in *University Sermons*, p. 137.

earthly life affords only broken and intermittent glimpses. "That where I am ye may be also." This word of Christ sums up for the disciple his highest hope. To be with Christ is to be satisfied, for Life and Truth meet in Him; and to know Him in the intimacy of personal fellowship is eternal life. "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Ps. xvii. 15).

4. Shall we be perfect in Heaven? What is meant by perfection? Any perfection which excludes growth we must reject from our thought of the hereafter, for, as we have seen, growth is part of the essential meaning of personal immortality. It is impossible for a developing being to form any complete idea of perfection. The content of the ideal of perfection changes as we grow. But perfection as applied to persons connotes the very opposite of stagnation. God is perfect, but He is perfect activity. Perfection in the case of finite personalities carries with it a double thought; the thought of a growing experience, and the thought of a development which is free from the hindrances which mar our advance here. Of these hindrances the chief is sin. The Bible pictures Heaven as a sinless state. The Christian looks forward to being set free from sin in the other life. Some have felt a difficulty here. They question whether sin, which continues to stain the earthly life of the maturest saint to the end of his days, can be so entirely left behind as the Bible seems to suggest. Will sinlessness be reached at one stride, as it were? Must there not be many stages before

such a condition is attained? We must note how great an eclipse the brightness of the Christian hope would suffer if we had to abandon our belief that the heavenly state was a sinless state. Most of the misery of the world is caused by sin, and to a man like St. Paul the two profoundest realities in his life were his own sinfulness and Christ's redeeming grace. To be free from sin was the deepest desire of his soul. His wish to be with Christ hereafter was the expression of that desire, as it has been the expression of a similar desire on the part of thousands all through Christian history. It is true that we are unable to conceive how the transition from sinfulness to sinlessness can be effected; but even those who look for a continuance hereafter of the moral struggle postulate an eventual freedom from sin as the issue of the whole development. Must not such freedom necessitate at some point in our growth a sudden change? Have we really lessened the difficulty for thought by carrying over sinfulness into the other life? Eliminate sin, and you make possible the growth of that unhindered fellowship with God which is the crown and meaning of personality. The soul's latent capacities then have full opportunity for expansion, and the wealth of the Divine life lies open for its appropriation.[1]

Christianity has entirely transformed the conception of immortality. I cannot do better than conclude this volume by attempting to summarize the nature of the change which it has effected.

1. "I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." Christ

[1] Cp. Griffith-Jones, *op. cit.* pp. 326-7.

by His teaching and by His Easter victory has confirmed the universal longings and hopes of humanity. He has fulfilled the prophecies of the human heart. "If it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you." It is as if He were saying, "Trust that deep-rooted instinct which looks beyond death for another life". Christ has brought certainty to hopes which, though present, were often uncertain and chequered, and in so doing has revealed the true significance of those hopes. We look back on them in the light of the Christian revelation and see in them a proof of the spiritual worth of man.

2. Mere continuance of personality after death is only the bare framework of the Christian hope. The revelation which Christ brought is a revelation of life rather than of existence. A life lived with Christ, nurtured by Him, sharing in His fullness, drawing from Him its energies—that is the Christian life. It is a life which death cannot destroy, but rather sets free for its true consummation. We have seen how the Old Testament believer gradually came to believe in an immortality altogether different from the shadowy life of Sheol, as he realized what man's fellowship with God meant. The fulfilment which Christ brought moved along the lines of a deepening of this earlier experience. The new life bestowed by Christ on humanity was a life of fellowship with God. Men began to learn the measure of their spiritual possibilities; and when once they had understood how great they were immortality became the surest of convictions. Christ filled the conception of immortality with a new meaning. It is now the

richest of our conceptions, if it is rightly grasped, because it involves all the boundless possibilities of growing personal relationships between the human soul and God.

3. Christ linked to his own Person the belief in immortality. He proclaimed Himself to be the Resurrection and the Life ; and said, " Because I live, ye shall live also ". For the Christian who accepts the orthodox interpretation of Christ's Person this makes his assurance of immortality doubly sure. For He who thus spoke is Lord of all the circles of being. He is Himself the fountain of life, and whoso shares that life is beyond the power of death to harm. Nor is it only that His word is authoritative. Deeper than the authoritative utterance lies the attraction of His Personality, ultimately unanalysable, as is all personal influence, but with proved power to draw to itself all that is best and noblest in human nature. We feel that, if we are to trust anyone, we must trust Him. The soul enters on its path of self-committal to His keeping, and of that is born an experience which is its own evidence. Death no longer counts. If the Head could not be " holden " of death, how can the members be, who share the spiritual life of the Head ?

4. What effect upon conduct had the belief in judgment to come in pre-Christian times ? What effect has it now among races which have not been influenced by Christianity ? I suspect that the effect is small. The whole conception of immortality in pagan circles is too shadowy, or too involved with grotesque and superstitious elements, to have much

abiding ethical influence. It may be said that the same is true of the majority of professing Christians, who amid the attractions of earthly life put aside all thoughts of future judgment. But the conduct of its adherents is no criterion of the worth of a religion. The point is, that Christianity has given a rich ethical colour to the conception of immortality. It has related the conception to conduct as no other creed has succeeded in doing. And it has done so in two ways. It has made central the thought of a future judgment according to character; and it has emphasized the value and dignity of the human soul. Belief in immortality reinforces our sense of human worth, for, if an immortal destiny lies before us, with what significance are our daily actions invested! We are builders for eternity; we share in the Divine nature. The value of the human soul for Christ lay in its moral and religious possibilities. It was because these were so great that He spoke so gravely of judgment to come, and of the seriousness of our earthly choices. Character in the Christian scheme is the pearl of great price. Life is the opportunity for forming character, and character is stamped with the seal of immortality.

5. "He shall change the body of our humiliation that it may be like unto his glorious body." Christianity has thrown a halo of sanctity round the body. Matter is no more to be regarded as evil; it is on the contrary a sacrament of the spiritual. The body is the subject of redemption as well as the soul. Immortality belongs to the living man in his wholeness. The body transfigured and spiritualized is still to be the instrument of his spirit. By means of it we may

hope to come into many new relationships with matter, finding in Nature a revelation of God which will surprise us by its richness.

6. Finally, the reserve of Christianity about the future is magnificently strong. And, as Salmond points out, it has made this contribution of reserve just where it was most needed, "where the conjectures of men have been least restrained and of smallest profit for the practical conduct of life".[1] It assures us of immortality, basing the assurance upon the very deepest elements of our being as personal selves, and filling the conception with an inexhaustible wealth of meaning, but it does little or nothing to satisfy curiosity. It provides no map of the other world and leaves a hundred questions unanswered. It bids us cultivate a reverent agnosticism in regard to these speculative details. Is not such a temper the best soil for the growth of a strong and reasonable faith? Do we not need for our development the discipline which such a reserve imposes on us? We have enough light to walk by, and the light grows as experience deepens. Christianity tells us this, and it is enough; that we are neither mere links in a chain of mechanical happenings, nor mere passing moments in the life of God; but are sons of God, free, spiritual, immortal, with the destiny before us of an unbroken fellowship with Him who made us sharers in His own nature.

Such a hope is full of power and inspiration for the tasks of life. The individual needs it, and society needs it to-day as perhaps never before. How can

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 466.

we face the problems of the future, so complex, and so urgent, without the strength which comes from the Christian assurance of immortality? Life is supremely worth living if heaven is the goal. Tasks are worth working at, even though it is not given us here to see their full accomplishment, if there is a hereafter in which both the worker and what is of lasting value in his work are preserved, and where fragmentary efforts fuse in the completeness of a perfected whole. We read that Moses saw from afar the land of promise, but entered it not. Then, so the old legend runs, God buried him in a valley of Moab. God's burials are always resurrections, for the touch of the Divine is ever creative of life. And so the story does not end there; but on another mountain it was given to Moses to see something of the fulfilment of the hopes and labours which had once been his. He understood the significance of life's unaccomplished tasks, and realized the greatness of the scale on which he had worked. So may it be with us; only ours should be a richer experience, since Christ has made sure to us, as was not made sure to Moses, the blessed hope of a life with God hereafter.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, ABERDEEN